

THE TRAGEDY OF KING RICHARD III

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KING EDWARD the Fourth.
 RICHARD, Duke of York,
 EDWARD, Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward V.,
 GEORGE, Duke of Clarence,
 RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III.,
 A young son of Clarence.
 HENRY, Earl of Richmond, afterwards King Henry VII.
 CARDINAL BOURCHIER, Archbishop of Canterbury.
 THOMAS ROTHERHAM, Archbishop of York.
 JOHN MORTON, Bishop of Ely.
 DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.
 DUKE OF NORFOLK.
 EARL OF SURREY, his son.
 EARL RIVERS, brother to Elizabeth.
 MARQUIS OF DORSET and LORD GREY, sons to Elizabeth.
 EARL OF OXFORD.
 LORD HASTINGS.
 LORD STANLEY, called also EARL OF DERBY.
 LORD LOVELL.
 SIR THOMAS VAUGHAN.
 SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF.

SIR WILLIAM CATESBY.
 SIR JAMES TYRREL.
 SIR JAMES BLOUNT.
 SIR WALTER HERBERT.
 SIR ROBERT BRAKENBURY, Lieutenant of the Tower.
 CHRISTOPHER URSWICK, a priest. Another priest.
 TRESSEL and BERKELEY, gentlemen attending on the Lady Anne.
 Lord Mayor of London. Sheriff of Wiltshire.
 ELIZABETH, queen to King Edward IV.
 MARGARET, widow of King Henry VI.
 DUCHESS OF YORK, mother to King Edward IV.
 LADY ANNE, widow of Edward Prince of Wales, son to King Henry VI.; afterwards married to Richard.
 A young daughter of Clarence (MARGARET PLANTAGENET).
 Ghosts of those murdered by Richard III., Lords and other Attendants; a Pursuivant, Scrivener, Citizens, Murderers, Messengers, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE: *England.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *London. A street.*

Enter RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, *solus.*

Glou. Now is the winter of our discontent
 Made glorious summer by this sun of York;
 And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house
 In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
 Now are our brows bound with victorious
 wreaths;
 Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;
 Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
 Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
 Grim-visaged war hath smooth'd his wrinkled
 front;
 And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds 10
 To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
 He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
 To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.

But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
 I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's
 majesty
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;
 I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
 Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time 20
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
 And that so lamely and unfashionable
 That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;
 Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
 Have no delight to pass away the time,
 Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
 And descant on mine own deformity:
 And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
 To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
 I am determin'd to prove a villain 30
 And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
 Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,

By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
To set my brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate the one against the other:
And if King Edward be as true and just
As I am subtle, false and treacherous,
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up,
About a prophecy, which says that G
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be. 40
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here Clarence comes.

*Enter CLARENCE, guarded, and
BRAKENBURY.*

Brother, good day: what means this armed guard

That waits upon your grace?

Clar. His majesty,
Tendering my person's safety, hath appointed
This conduct to convey me to the Tower.

Glou. Upon what cause?

Clar. Because my name is George.

Glou. Alack, my lord, that fault is none
of yours;

He should, for that, commit your godfathers:
O, belike his majesty hath some intent 49
That you shall be new-christen'd in the Tower.
But what's the matter, Clarence? may I know?

Clar. Yea, Richard, when I know; for I
protest

As yet I do not: but, as I can learn,
He hearkens after prophecies and dreams;
And from the cross-row plucks the letter G
And says a wizard told him that by G
His issue disinherited should be;
And, for my name of George begins with G.
It follows in his thought that I am he. 59
These, as I learn, and such like toys as these
Have moved his highness to commit me now.

Glou. Why, this it is, when men are ruled
by women:

'Tis not the king that sends you to the Tower;
My Lady Grey his wife, Clarence, 'tis she
That tempers him to this extremity.
Was it not she and that good man of worship,
Anthony Woodville, her brother there,
That made him send Lord Hastings to the
Tower,

From whence this present day he is deliver'd?
We are not safe, Clarence; we are not safe.

Clar. By heaven, I think there's no man is
secure

But the queen's kindred and night-walking
heralds

That trudge betwixt the king and Mistress
Shore.

Heard ye not what an humble suppliant
Lord Hastings was to her for his delivery?

Glou. Humbly complaining to her deity

Got my lord chamberlain his liberty.
I'll tell you what; I think it is our way,
If we will keep in favour with the king,
To be her men and wear her livery: 80
The jealous o'erworn widow and herself,
Since that our brother dubb'd them gentle-
women,

Are mighty gossips in this monarchy.

Brah. I beseech your graces both to pardon
me;

His majesty hath straitly given in charge
That no man shall have private conference,
Of what degree soever, with his brother.

Glou. Even so; an't please your worship,
Brakenbury,

You may partake of any thing we say:

We speak no treason, man: we say the king
Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen
Well struck in years, fair, and not jealous;
We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,
A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing
tongue;

And that the queen's kindred are made gentle-
folks:

How say you, sir? can you deny all this?

Brah. With this, my lord, myself have
nought to do.

Glou. Naught to do with Mistress Shore!
I tell thee, fellow,

He that doth naught with her, excepting one,
Were best he do it secretly, alone. 100

Brah. What one, my lord?

Glou. Her husband, knave: wouldst thou
betray me?

Brah. I beseech your grace to pardon me,
and withal

Forbear your conference with the noble duke.

Clar. We know thy charge, Brakenbury,
and will obey.

Glou. We are the queen's abjects, and
must obey.

Brother, farewell: I will unto the king;
And whatsoever you will employ me in,
Were it to call King Edward's widow sister.
I will perform it to enfranchise you. 110
Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood
Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

Clar. I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

Glou. Well, your imprisonment shall not
be long;

I will deliver you, or else lie for you:

Meantime, have patience.

Clar. I must perforce. Farewell.

[*Exeunt Clarence, Brakenbury, and Guard.*]

Glou. Go, tread the path that thou shalt
ne'er return,

Simple, plain Clarence! I do love thee so,
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven.
If heaven will take the present at our hands.

But who comes here? the new-deliver'd
Hastings? 121

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Hast. Good time of day unto my gracious lord!

Glou. As much unto my good lord chamberlain!

Well are you welcome to the open air.
How hath your lordship brook'd imprisonment?

Hast. With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must:

But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks
That were the cause of my imprisonment.

Glou. No doubt, no doubt; and so shall Clarence too;

For they that were your enemies are his, 130
And have prevail'd as much on him as you.

Hast. More pity that the eagle should be mew'd,

While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

Glou. What news abroad?

Hast. No news so bad abroad as this at home;

The king is sickly, weak and melancholy,
And his physicians fear him mightily.

Glou. Now, by Saint Paul, this news is bad indeed.

O, he hath kept an evil diet long,
And overmuch consumed his royal person:

'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.

What, is he in his bed?

Hast. He is.

Glou. Go you before, and I will follow you.
[*Exit Hastings.*]

He cannot live, I hope; and must not die
Till George be pack'd with post-horse up to heaven.

'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence,
With lies well steel'd with weighty arguments;

And, if I fail not in my deep intent,
Clarence hath not another day to live: 150

Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy,

And leave the world for me to bustle in!
For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter.

What though I kill'd her husband and her father?

The readiest way to make the wench amends
Is to become her husband and her father:

The which will I; not all so much for love

As for another secret close intent,

By marrying her which I must reach unto.

But yet I run before my horse to market: 160
Clarence still breathes; Edward still lives and reigns:

When they are gone, then must I count my gains.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *The same. Another street.*

Enter the corpse of KING HENRY the Sixth, Gentlemen with halberds to guard it; LADY ANNE being the mourner.

Anne. Set down, set down your honourable load,

If honour may be shrouded in a hearse,
Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament
The untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.
Poor key-cold figure of a holy king!
Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster!
Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood!
Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost,
To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,
Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughter'd son,
Stabb'd by the selfsame hand that made these wounds!

Lo, in these windows that let forth thy life,
I pour the helpless balm of my poor eyes.
Cursed be the hand that made these fatal holes!
Cursed be the heart that had the heart to do it!
Cursed the blood that let this blood from hence!

More direful hap betide that hated wretch,
That makes us wretched by the death of thee,

Than I can wish to adders, spiders, toads,
Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives! 20

If ever he have child, abortive be it,
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,

Whose ugly and unnatural aspect
May fright the hopeful mother at the view;

And that be heir to his unhappiness!
If ever he have wife, let her be made

As miserable by the death of him
As I am made by my poor lord and thee:

Come, now towards Chertsey with your holy load.

Taken from Paul's to be interred there; 30
And still, as you are weary of the weight,

Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Stay, you that bear the corse, and set it down.

Anne. What black magician conjures up this fiend,

To stop devoted charitable deed?

Glou. Villains, set down the corse; or, by Saint Paul,

I'll make a corse of him that disobeys.

Gent. My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass.

Glou. Unmanner'd dog! stand thou, when I command:

Advance thy halberd higher than my breast,
Or, by Saint Paul, I'll strike thee to my foot.

And spurn upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.

Anne. What, do you tremble? are you all afraid?

Alas, I blame you not; for you are mortal,
And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil.
Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell!
Thou hadst but power over his mortal body,
His soul thou canst not have; therefore, be gone.

Glou. Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

Anne. Foul devil, for God's sake, hence,
and trouble us not; 50
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,

Fill'd it with cursing cries and deep exclams.
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.

O, gentlemen, see, see! dead Henry's wounds
Open their congeal'd mouths and bleed afresh!
Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity;
For 'tis thy presence that exhales this blood
From cold and empty veins, where no blood dwells;

Thy deed, inhuman and unnatural, 60
Provokes this deluge most unnatural.

O God, which this blood madest, revenge his death!

O earth, which this blood drink'st, revenge his death!

Either heaven with lightning strike the murderer dead,

Or earth, gape open wide and eat him quick,
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,
Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered!

Glou. Lady, you know no rules of charity,
Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

Anne. Villain, thou know'st no law of God
nor man: 70

No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

Glou. But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

Anne. O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

Glou. More wonderful, when angels are so angry.

Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,
Of these supposed evils, to give me leave,
By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

Anne. Vouchsafe, defused infection of a man,

For these known evils, but to give me leave.
By circumstance, to curse thy cursed self. 80

Glou. Fairer than tongue can name thee,
let me have

Some patient leisure to excuse myself.

Anne. Fouler than heart can think thee,
thou canst make

By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

Glou. By such despair, I should accuse myself.

Anne. And, by despairing, shouldst thou stand excused;

For doing worthy vengeance on thyself,
Which didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

Glou. Say that I slew them not?

Anne. Why, then they are not dead:
But dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee.

Glou. I did not kill your husband.

Anne. Why, then he is alive.

Glou. Nay, he is dead; and slain by Edward's hand.

Anne. In thy foul throat thou liest: Queen Margaret saw

Thy murderous falchion smoking in his blood;
The which thou once didst bend against her breast,

But that thy brothers beat aside the point.

Glou. I was provoked by her slanderous tongue,

Which laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

Anne. Thou wast provoked by thy bloody mind,

Which never dreamt on aught but butcheries:
Didst thou not kill this king?

Glou. I grant ye. 101

Anne. Dost grant me, hedgehog? then,
God grant me too

Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!
O, he was gentle, mild, and virtuous!

Glou. The fitter for the King of heaven,
that hath him.

Anne. He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

Glou. Let him thank me, that help to send him thither;

For he was fitter for that place than earth.

Anne. And thou unfit for any place but hell.

Glou. Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it. 110

Anne. Some dungeon.

Glou. Your bed-chamber.

Anne. Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest!

Glou. So will it, madam, till I lie with you.

Anne. I hope so.

Glou. I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,
To leave this keen encounter of our wits,
And fall somewhat into a slower method,
Is not the causer of the timeless deaths
Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,
As blameful as the executioner?

Anne. Thou art the cause, and most accursed effect. 120

Glou. Your beauty was the cause of that effect;

Your beauty, which did haunt me in my sleep

To undertake the death of all the world,
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.

Anne. If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,
These nails should rend that beauty from my cheeks.

Glou. These eyes could never endure sweet beauty's wreck;
You should not blemish it, if I stood by:
As all the world is cheered by the sun,
So I by that; it is my day, my life. 130

Anne. Black night o'ershade thy day, and death thy life!

Glou. Curse not thyself, fair creature; thou art both.

Anne. I would I were, to be revenged on thee.

Glou. It is a quarrel most unnatural.
To be revenged on him that loveth you.

Anne. It is a quarrel just and reasonable,
To be revenged on him that slew my husband.

Glou. He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband,
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

Anne. His better doth not breathe upon the earth. 140

Glou. He lives that loves thee better than he could.

Anne. Name him.

Glou. Plantagenet.

Anne. Why, that was he.

Glou. The selfsame name, but one of better nature.

Anne. Where is he?

Glou. Here. [*She spitteth at him.*]
Why dost thou spit at me?

Anne. Would it were mortal poison, for thy sake!

Glou. Never came poison from so sweet a place.

Anne. Never hung poison on a fouler toad.
Out of my sight! thou dost infect my eyes.

Glou. Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine. 150

Anne. Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead!

Glou. I would they were, that I might die at once;

For now they kill me with a living death.
Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,
Shamed their aspect with store of childish drops:

These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear,
No, when my father York and Edward wept,
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made
When black-faced Clifford shook his sword at him:

Nor when thy warlike father, like a child, 160
Told the sad story of my father's death,

And twenty times made pause to sob and weep,
That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks,
Like trees bedash'd with rain: in that sad time
My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear;
And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,

Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.

I never sued to friend nor enemy;
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing words;

But, now thy beauty is proposed my fee, 170
My proud heart sues and prompts my tongue to speak. [*She looks scornfully at him.*

Teach not thy lips such scorn, for they were made

For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.

If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,
Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword;

Which if thou please to hide in this true bosom,
And let the soul forth that adoreth thee,

I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,

And humbly beg the death upon my knee.

[*He lays his breast open: she offers at it with his sword.*

Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry,
But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me. 181

Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward,

But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

[*Here she lets fall the sword.*

Take up the sword again, or take up me.

Anne. Arise, dissembler: though I wish thy death,

I will not be the executioner.

Glou. Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.

Anne. I have already.

Glou. Tush, that was in thy rage:
Speak it again, and, even with the word,
That hand, which, for thy love, did kill thy love, 190

Shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love;

To both their deaths thou shalt be accessory.

Anne. I would I knew thy heart.

Glou. 'Tis figured in my tongue.

Anne. I fear me both are false

Glou. Then never man was true.

Anne. Well, well, put up your sword.

Glou. Say, then, my peace is made.

Anne. That shall you know hereafter.

Glou. But shall I live in hope? 200

Anne. All men, I hope, live so.

Glou. Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

Anne. To take is not to give.

Glou. Look, how this ring encompasseth thy finger,

Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart;
Wear both of them, for both of them are thine.

And if thy poor devoted suppliant may
But heg one favour at thy gracious hand,
Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever.

Anne. What is it? 210

Glou. That it would please thee leave these
sad designs

To him that hath more cause to be a mourner,
And presently repair to Crosby Place;
Where, after I have solemnly interr'd
At Chertsey monastery this noble king,
And wet his grave with my repentant tears,
I will with all expedient duty see you:
For divers unknown reasons, I beseech you,
Grant me this boon.

Anne. With all my heart; and much it
joys me too, 220

To see you are become so penitent.
Tressel and Berkeley, go along with me.

Glou. Bid me farewell.

Anne. 'Tis more than you deserve;
But since you teach me how to flatter you,
Imagine I have said farewell already.

[*Exeunt Lady Anne, Tressel, and Berkeley.*]

Glou. Sirs, take up the corse.

Gent. Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

Glou. No, to White-Friars; there attend
my coming. [*Exeunt all but Gloucester.*]

Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?
Was ever woman in this humour won?
I'll have her; but I will not keep her long.
What! I, that kill'd her husband and his father,
To take her in her heart's extremest hate,
With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,
The bleeding witness of her hatred by;
Having God, her conscience, and these bars
against me,

And I nothing to back my suit at all,
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,
And yet to win her, all the world to nothing!
Ha!

Hath she forgot already that brave prince, 240
Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months
since,

Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewksbury?
A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,
Framed in the prodigality of nature,
Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,
The spacious world cannot again afford:
And will she yet debase her eyes on me,
That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet
prince,

And made her widow to a woful bed?
On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?
On me, that halt and am unshapen thus? 251
My dukedom to a beggarly denier,
I do mistake my person all this while:
Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,
Myself to be a marvellous proper man.
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,

And entertain some score or two of tailors,
To study fashions to adorn my body:
Since I am crept in favour with myself, 260
I will maintain it with some little cost.
But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave;
And then return lamenting to my love.
Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,
That I may see my shadow as I pass. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *The palace.*

*Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, LORD RIVERS, and
LORD GREY.*

Riv. Have patience, madam: there's no
doubt his majesty
Will soon recover his accustom'd health.

Grey. In that you brook it ill, it makes him
worse:

Therefore, for God's sake, entertain good
comfort,
And cheer his grace with quick and merry
words.

Q. Eliz. If he were dead, what would be-
tide of me?

Riv. No other harm but loss of such a lord.

Q. Eliz. The loss of such a lord includes
all harm.

Grey. The heavens have bless'd you with
a goodly son,

To be your comforter when he is gone. 10

Q. Eliz. Oh, he is young and his minority
Is put unto the trust of Richard Gloucester,
A man that loves not me, nor none of you.

Riv. Is it concluded he shall be protector?

Q. Eliz. It is determined, not concluded yet:
But so it must be, if the king miscarry.

Enter BUCKINGHAM and DERBY.

Grey. Here come the lords of Buckingham
and Derby.

Buck. Good time of day unto your royal
grace!

Der. God make your majesty joyful as you
have been!

Q. Eliz. The Countess Richmond, good my
Lord of Derby, 20

To your good prayers will scarcely say amen.
Yet, Derby, notwithstanding she's your wife,
And loves not me, be you, good lord, assured
I hate not you for her proud arrogance.

Der. I do beseech you, either not believe
The envious slanders of her false accusers;
Or, if she be accused in true report,
Bear with her weakness, which, I think, pro-
ceeds

From wayward sickness, and no grounded
malice.

Riv. Saw you the king to-day, my Lord of
Derby? 30

Der. But now the Duke of Buckingham
and I
Are come from visiting his majesty.

Q. Eliz. What likelihood of his amend-
ment, lords?

Buck. Madam, good hope; his grace
speaks cheerfully.

Q. Eliz. God grant him health! Did you
confer with him?

Buck. Madam, we did: he desires to make
atonement

Between the Duke of Gloucester and your
brothers,

And between them and my Lord Chamberlain;
And sent to warn them to his royal presence.

Q. Eliz. Would all were well! but that
will never be: 40

I fear our happiness is at the highest.

Enter GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and DORSET.

Glou. They do me wrong, and I will not
endure it:

Who are they that complain unto the king,
That I, forsooth, am stern and love them not?
By holy Paul, they love his grace but lightly
That fill his ears with such dissentious rumours.
Because I cannot flatter and speak fair,
Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive and cog,
Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,
I must be held a rancorous enemy. 50
Cannot a plain man live and think no harm,
But thus his simple truth must be abused
By silken, sly, insinuating Jacks?

Riv. To whom in all this presence speaks
your grace?

Glou. To thee, that hast nor honesty nor
grace.

When have I injured thee? when done thee
wrong?

Or thee? or thee? or any of your faction?
A plague upon you all! His royal person,—
Whom God preserve better than you would
wish!—

Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing-while, 60
But you must trouble him with lewd com-
plaints.

Q. Eliz. Brother of Gloucester, you mis-
take the matter.

The king, of his own royal disposition,
And not provoked by any suitor else;
Aiming, belike, at your interior hatred,
Which in your outward actions shows itself,
Against my kindred, brothers, and myself,
Makes him to send; that thereby he may gather
The ground of your ill-will, and so remove it.

Glou. I cannot tell: the world is grown so
bad, 70

That wrens make prey where eagles dare not
perch:

Since every Jack became a gentleman,
There's many a gentle person made a Jack.

Q. Eliz. Come, come, we know your mean-
ing, brother Gloucester;

You envy my advancement and my friends':
God grant we never may have need of you!

Glou. Meantime, God grants that we have
need of you:

Our brother is imprison'd by your means,
Myself disgraced, and the nobility
Held in contempt; whilst many fair promotions
Are daily given to ennobles those 81
That scarce, some two days since, were worth
a noble.

Q. Eliz. By Him that raised me to this
careful height

From that contented hap which I enjoy'd,
I never did incense his majesty
Against the Duke of Clarence, but have been
An earnest advocate to plead for him.

My lord, you do me shameful injury,
Falsely to draw me in these vile suspects.

Glou. You may deny that you were not
the cause 90

Of my Lord Hastings' late imprisonment.

Riv. She may, my lord, for—

Glou. She may, Lord Rivers! why, who
knows not so?

She may do more, sir, than denying that:
She may help you to many fair preferments;
And then deny her aiding hand therein,
And lay those honours on your high deserts.
What may she not? She may, yea, marry,
may she,—

Riv. What, marry, may she?

Glou. What, marry, may she! marry with
a king, 100

A bachelor, a handsome stripling too:
I wish your grandam had a worse match.

Q. Eliz. My Lord of Gloucester, I have
too long borne

Your blunt upbraidings and your bitter scoffs:
By heaven, I will acquaint his majesty
With those gross taunts I often have endured.
I had rather be a country servant-maid
Than a great queen, with this condition,
To be thus taunted, scorn'd, and baited at:

Enter QUEEN MARGARET, behind.

Small joy have I in being England's queen.

Q. Mar. And lessen'd be that small, God,
I beseech thee!

Thy honour, state and seat is due to me.

Glou. What! threat you me with telling of
the king?

Tell him, and spare not: look, what I have said
I will avouch in presence of the king:

I dare adventure to be sent to the Tower.

'Tis time to speak; my pains are quite forgot.

Q. Mar. Out, devil! I remember them too well:
 Thou slewest my husband Henry in the Tower,
 And Edward, my poor son, at Tewksbury.
Glou. Ere you were queen, yea, or your husband king,
 I was a pack-horse in his great affairs;
 A weeder-out of his proud adversaries,
 A liberal rewarder of his friends:
 To royalise his blood I spilt mine own.
Q. Mar. Yea, and much better blood than his or thine.
Glou. In all which time you and your husband Grey
 Were factious for the house of Lancaster;
 And, Rivers, so were you. Was not your husband
 In Margaret's battle at Saint Alban's slain?
 Let me put in your minds, if you forget,
 What you have been ere now, and what you are;
 Withal, what I have been, and what I am.
Q. Mar. A murderous villain, and so still thou art.
Glou. Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick;
 Yea, and forswore himself,—which Jesu pardon!—
Q. Mar. Which God revenge!
Glou. To fight on Edward's party for the crown;
 And for his meed, poor lord, he is mew'd up.
 I would to God my heart were flint, like Edward's; 140
 Or Edward's soft and pitiful, like mine:
 I am too childish-foolish for this world.
Q. Mar. Hie thee to hell for shame, and leave the world,
 Thou cacodemon! there thy kingdom is.
Riv. My Lord of Gloucester, in those busy days
 Which here you urge to prove us enemies,
 We follow'd then our lord, our lawful king:
 So should we you, if you should be our king.
Glou. If I should be! I had rather be a pedlar:
 Far be it from my heart, the thought of it! 150
Q. Eliz. As little joy, my lord, as you suppose
 You should enjoy, were you this country's king.
 As little joy may you suppose in me,
 That I enjoy, being the queen thereof.
Q. Mar. A little joy enjoys the queen thereof;
 For I am she, and altogether joyless.
 I can no longer hold me patient. [*Advancing.*
 Hear me, you wrangling pirates, that fall out
 In sharing that which you have pill'd from me!
 Which of you trembles not that looks on me?

If not, that, I being queen, you bow like subjects, 161
 Yet that by you deposed, you quake like rebels?
O gentle villain, do not turn away!
Glou. Foul wrinkled witch, what makest thou in my sight?
Q. Mar. But repetition of what thou hast marr'd;
 That will I make before I let thee go.
Glou. Wert thou not banished on pain of death?
Q. Mar. I was; but I do find more pain in banishment
 Than death can yield me here by my abode.
 A husband and a son thou owest to me; 170
 And thou a kingdom; all of you allegiance:
 The sorrow that I have, by right is yours,
 And all the pleasures you usurp are mine.
Glou. The curse my noble father laid on thee,
 When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper
 And with thy scorns drew'st rivers from his eyes,
 And then, to dry them, gavest the duke a clout
 Steep'd in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland,—
 His curses, then from bitterness of soul
 Denounced against thee, are all fall'n upon thee; 180
 And God, not we, hath plagued thy bloody deed.
Q. Eliz. So just is God, to right the innocent.
Hast. O, 'twas the foulest deed to slay that babe,
 And the most merciless that e'er was heard of!
Riv. Tyrants themselves wept when it was reported.
Dor. No man but prophesied revenge for it.
Buck. Northumberland, then present, wept to see it.
Q. Mar. What! were you snarling all before I came,
 Ready to catch each other by the throat,
 And turn you all your hatred now on me? 190
 Did York's dread curse prevail so much with heaven
 That Henry's death, my lovely Edward's death,
 Their kingdom's loss, my woful banishment,
 Could all but answer for that peevish brat?
 Can curses pierce the clouds and enter heaven?
 Why then, give way, dull clouds, to my quick curses!
 If not by war, by surfeit die your king,
 As ours by murder to make him a king!
 Edward thy son, which now is the Prince of Wales,

For Edward my son, which was Prince of
Wales,

Die in his youth by like untimely violence! 201
Thyself a queen, for me that was a queen,
Outlive thy glory, like my wretched self!
Long mayst thou live to wail thy children's loss;
And see another, as I see thee now,
Deck'd in thy rights, as thou art stall'd in mine!
Long die thy happy days before thy death;
And, after many lengthen'd hours of grief,
Die neither mother, wife, nor England's queen!
Rivers and Dorset, you were standers by, 210
And so wast thou, Lord Hastings, when my son
Was stabb'd with bloody daggers: God, I
pray him,

That none of you may live your natural age,
But by some unlook'd accident cut off!

Glou. Have done thy charm, thou hateful
wither'd hag!

Q. Mar. And leave out thee? stay, dog,
for thou shalt hear me.

If heaven have any grievous plague in store
Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,
O, let them keep it till thy sins be ripe,
And then hurl down their indignation 220
On thee, the troubler of the poor world's peace!
The worm of Conscience still begnaw thy soul!
Thy friends suspect for traitors while thou
livest,

And take deep traitors for thy dearest friends!
No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine,
Unless it be whilst some tormenting dream
Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils!
Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog!
Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity
The slave of nature and the son of hell! 230
Thou slander of thy mother's heavy womb!
Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins!
Thou rag of honour! thou detested—

Glou. Margaret.

Q. Mar. Richard!

Glou. Ha!

Q. Mar. I call thee not.

Glou. I cry thee mercy then, for I had
thought

That thou hadst call'd me all these bitter names.

Q. Mar. Why, so I did; but look'd for no
reply.

O, let me make the period to my curse!

Glou. 'Tis done by me, and ends in 'Mar-
garet.'

Q. Eliz. Thus have you breathed your
curse against yourself. 240

Q. Mar. Poor painted queen, vain flourish
of my fortune!

Why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider,
Whose deadly web ensnareth thee about?
Fool, fool! thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.

The time will come when thou shalt wish for
me

To help thee curse that poisonous hunch-back'd
toad.

Hast. False-boding woman, end thy frantic
curse,

Lest to thy harm thou move our patience.

Q. Mar. Foul shame upon you! you have
all moved mine.

Riv. Were you well served, you would be
taught your duty. 250

Q. Mar. To serve me well, you all should
do me duty,

Teach me to be your queen, and you my sub-
jects:

O, serve me well, and teach yourselves that
duty!

Dor. Dispute not with her; she is lunatic.

Q. Mar. Peace, master marquess, you are
malapert:

Your fire-new stamp of honour is scarce cur-
rent.

O, that your young nobility could judge

What 'twere to lose it, and be miserable!

They that stand high have many blasts to
shake them;

And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.

Glou. Good counsel, marry: learn it, learn
it, marquess. 261

Dor. It toucheth you, my lord, as much as
me.

Glou. Yea, and much more: but I was
born so high,

Our aery buildeth in the cedar's top,

And dallies with the wind and scorns the sun.

Q. Mar. And turns the sun to shade; alas!
alas!

Witness my son, now in the shade of death;
Whose bright out-shining beams thy cloudy
wrath

Hath in eternal darkness folded up.

Your aery buildeth in our aery's nest. 270

O God, that seest it, do not suffer it;

As it was won with blood, lost be it so!

Buck. Have done! for shame, if not for
charity.

Q. Mar. Urge neither charity nor shame to
me:

Uncharitably with me have you dealt,

And shamefully by you my hopes are butcher'd.

My charity is outrage, life my shame;

And in that shame still live my sorrow's
range!

Buck. Have done, have done.

Q. Mar. O princely Buckingham, I'll kiss
thy hand, 280

In sign of league and amity with thee:

Now fair befall thee and thy noble house!

Thy garments are not spotted with our blood.

Nor thou within the compass of my curse.

Buck. Nor no one here; for curses never pass

The lips of those that breathe them in the air.

Q. Mar. I'll not believe but they ascend the sky,

And there awake God's gentle-sleeping peace.

O Buckingham, take heed of yonder dog!

Look, when he fawns, he bites; and when he bites,

His venom tooth will rankle to the death:

Have not to do with him, beware of him;

Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him,

And all their ministers attend on him.

Glou. What doth she say, my Lord of Buckingham?

Buck. Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord.

Q. Mar. What, dost thou scorn me for my gentle counsel?

And soothe the devil that I warn thee from?

O, but remember this another day,

When he shall split thy very heart with sorrow,

And say poor Margaret was a prophetess! 301

Live each of you the subjects to his hate, And he to yours, and all of you to God's.

[*Exit.*]

Hast. My hair doth stand on end to hear her curses.

Riv. And so doth mine: I muse why she's at liberty.

Glou. I cannot blame her: by God's holy mother,

She hath had too much wrong; and I repent My part thereof that I have done to her.

Q. Eliz. I never did her any, to my knowledge.

Glou. But you have all the vantage of her wrong. 310

I was too hot to do somebody good,

That is too cold in thinking of it now.

Marry, as for Clarence, he is well repaid;

He is frank'd up to fattening for his pains:

God pardon them that are the cause of it!

Riv. A virtuous and a Christian-like conclusion,

To pray for them that have done scathe to us.

Glou. So do I ever: [*Aside*] being well advised

For had I cursed now, I had cursed myself.

Enter CATESBY.

Cates. Madam, his majesty doth call for you; 320

And for your grace; and you, my noble lords.

Q. Eliz. Catesby, we come. Lords, will you go with us?

Riv. Madam, we will attend your grace.

[*Exeunt all but Gloucester.*]

Glou. I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.

The secret mischiefs that I set abroad

I lay unto the grievous charge of others.

Clarence, whom I, indeed, have laid in darkness,

I do beweepe to many simple gulls;

Namely, to Hastings, Derby, Buckingham;

And say it is the queen and her allies 330

That stir the king against the duke my brother.

Now, they believe it; and withal whet me

To be revenged on Rivers, Vaughan, Grey:

But then I sigh; and with a piece of scripture,

Tell them that God bids us do good for evil:

And thus I clothe my naked villany

With old odd ends stolen out of holy writ;

And seem a saint, when most I play the devil.

Enter two Murderers.

But, soft! here come my executioners.

How now, my hardy, stout resolved mates! 340

Are you now going to dispatch this deed?

First Murd. We are, my lord; and come to have the warrant,

That we may be admitted where he is.

Glou. Well thought upon; I have it here about me. [*Gives the warrant.*]

When you have done, repair to Crosby Place.

But, sirs, be sudden in the execution,

Withal obdurate, do not hear him plead;

For Clarence is well-spoken, and perhaps

May move your hearts to pity, if you mark him.

First Murd. Tush! 350

Fear not, my lord, we will not stand to prate;

Talkers are no good doers: be assured

We come to use our hands and not our tongues.

Glou. Your eyes drop millstones, when fools' eyes drop tears:

I like you, lads; about your business straight;

Go, go, dispatch.

First Murd. We will, my noble lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *London. The Tower.*

Enter CLARENCE and BRAKENBURY.

Brak. Why looks your grace so heavily today?

Clar. O, I have pass'd a miserable night,

So full of ugly sights, of ghastly dreams,

That, as I am a Christian faithful man,

I would not spend another such a night,

Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days, So full of dismal terror was the time!

Brak. What was your dream? I long to hear you tell it.

Clar. Methoughts that I had broken from the Tower,

And was embark'd to cross to Burgundy; 10
And, in my company, my brother Gloucester;
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk
Upon the hatches: thence we look'd toward
England,

And cited up a thousand fearful times,
During the wars of York and Lancaster
That had befall'n us. As we paced along
Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,
Methought that Gloucester stumbled; and, in
falling,

Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard,
Into the tumbling billows of the main, 20
Lord, Lord! methought, what pain it was to
drown!

What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears!
What ugly sights of death within mine eyes!
Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;
Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea:
Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those
holes

Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,
As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems, 31
Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,
And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd
by.

Brak. Had you such leisure in the time of
death

To gaze upon the secrets of the deep?

Clar. Methought I had; and often did I
strive

To yield the ghost: but still the envious flood
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth
To seek the empty, vast and wandering air;
But smother'd it within my panting bulk, 40
All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea:

Brak. Awaked you not with this sore
agony?

Clar. O, no, my dream was lengthen'd
after life;

O, then began the tempest to my soul,
Who pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood,
With that grim ferryman which poets write of,
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.

The first that there did greet my stranger soul,
Was my great father-in-law, renowned War-
wick;

Who cried aloud, 'What scourge for perjury
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clar-
ence?'

And so he vanish'd: then came wandering by
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair
Dabbled in blood; and he squeak'd out aloud,
'Clarence is come; false, fleeting, perjured
Clarence.

That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury:

Seize on him, Furies, take him to your tor-
ments!

With that, methoughts, a legion of foul fiends
Environ'd me about, and howled in mine ears
Such hideous cries, that with the very noise 60
I trembling awaked, and for a season after
Could not believe but that I was in hell,
Such terrible impression made the dream.

Brak. No marvel, my lord, though it af-
frighted you;

I promise you, I am afraid to hear you tell it.

Clar. O Brakenbury, I have done those
things,

Which now bear evidence against my soul,
For Edward's sake; and see how he requites
me!

O God! if my deep prayers cannot appease
thee,

But thou wilt be avenged on my misdeeds, 70
Yet execute thy wrath in me alone,

O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor chil-
dren!

I pray thee, gentle keeper, stay by me;

My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.

Brak. I will, my lord: God give your
grace good rest! [*Clarence sleeps.*]

Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,
Makes the night morning, and the noon-tide
night.

Princes have but their titles for their glories,

An outward honour for an inward toil;

And, for unfelt imagination,

They often feel a world of restless cares:

So that, betwixt their titles and low names,

There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

Enter the two Murderers.

First Murd. Ho! who's here?

Brak. In God's name what are you, and
how came you hither?

First Murd. I would speak with Clarence,
and I came hither on my lers.

Brak. Yea, are you so brief?

Sec. Murd. O sir, it is better to be brief
than tedious. Show him our commission;
talk no more. [*Brakenbury reads it.*]

Brak. I am, in this, commanded to deliver
The noble Duke of Clarence to your hands:

I will not reason what is meant hereby,

Because I will be guiltless of the meaning.

Here are the keys, there sits the duke asleep:

I'll to the king; and signify to him

That thus I have resign'd my charge to you.

First Murd. Do so, it is a point of wis-
dom: fare you well. [*Exit Brakenbury.* 100]

Sec. Murd. What shall we stab him as he
sleeps?

First Murd. No; then he will say 'twas
done cowardly, when he wakes.

Sec. Murd. When he wakes! why, fool, he shall never wake till the judgement-day.

First Murd. Why, then he will say we stabbed him sleeping.

Sec. Murd. The urging of that word 'judgement' hath bred a kind of remorse in me. 110

First Murd. What, art thou afraid?

Sec. Murd. Not to kill him, having a warrant for it; but to be damned for killing him, from which no warrant can defend us.

First Murd. I thought thou hadst been resolute.

Sec. Murd. So I am, to let him live.

First Murd. Back to the Duke of Gloucester, tell him so. 119

Sec. Murd. I pray thee, stay a while: I hope my holy humour will change; 'twas wont to hold me but while one would tell twenty.

First Murd. How dost thou feel thyself now?

Sec. Murd. 'Faith, some certain dregs of conscience are yet within me.

First Murd. Remember our reward, when the deed is done.

Sec. Murd. 'Zounds, he dies: I had forgot the reward.

First Murd. Where is thy conscience now?

Sec. Murd. In the Duke of Gloucester's purse. 131

First Murd. So when he opens his purse to give us our reward, thy conscience flies out.

Sec. Murd. Let it go; there's few or none will entertain it.

First Murd. How if it come to thee again?

Sec. Murd. I'll not meddle with it; it is a dangerous thing: it makes a man a coward: a man cannot steal, but it accuseth him; he cannot swear, but it checks him; he cannot lie with his neighbour's wife, but it detects him: 'tis a blushing shamefast spirit that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills one full of obstacles: it made me once restore a purse of gold that I found; it beggars any man that keeps it: it is turned out of all towns and cities for a dangerous thing; and every man that means to live well endeavours to trust to himself and to live without it.

First Murd. 'Zounds, it is even now at my elbow, persuading me not to kill the duke. 150

Sec. Murd. Take the devil in thy mind, and believe him not: he would insinuate with thee but to make thee sigh.

First Murd. Tut, I am strong-framed, he cannot prevail with me, I warrant thee.

Sec. Murd. Spoke like a tall fellow that respects his reputation. Come, shall we to this gear?

First Murd. Take him over the costard with the hilts of thy sword, and then we will

chop him in the malmsey-butt in the next room. 161

Sec. Murd. O excellent device! make a sop of him.

First Murd. Hark! he stirs: shall I strike?

Sec. Murd. No, first let's reason with him.

Clar. Where art thou, keeper? give me a cup of wine.

Sec. Murd. You shall have wine enough, my lord, anon.

Clar. In God's name, what art thou?

Sec. Murd. A man, as you are. 170

Clar. But not, as I am, royal.

Sec. Murd. Nor you, as we are, loyal.

Clar. Thy voice is thunder, but thy looks are humble.

Sec. Murd. My voice is now the king's, my looks mine own.

Clar. How darkly and how deadly dost thou speak!

Your eyes do menace me: why look you pale? Who sent you hither? Wherefore do you come?

Both. To, to, to—

Clar. To murder me?

Both. Ay, ay.

Clar. You scarcely have the hearts to tell me so. 180

And therefore cannot have the hearts to do it. Wherein, my friends, have I offended you?

First Murd. Offended us you have not, but the king.

Clar. I shall be reconciled to him again.

Sec. Murd. Never, my lord; therefore prepare to die.

Clar. Are you call'd forth from out a world of men

To slay the innocent? What is my offence?

Where are the evidence that do accuse me?

What lawful quest have given their verdict up

Unto the frowning judge? or who pronounced

The bitter sentence of poor Clarence' death?

Before I be convict by course of law,

To threaten me with death is most unlawful.

I charge you, as you hope to have redemption

By Christ's dear blood shed for our grievous sins,

That you depart and lay no hands on me:

The deed you undertake is damnable.

First Murd. What we will do, we do upon command.

Sec. Murd. And he that hath commanded is the king.

Clar. Erroneous vassal! the great King of kings 200

Hath in the tables of his law commanded

That thou shalt do no murder: and wilt thou, then,

Spurn at his edict and fulfil a man's?

Take heed; for he holds vengeance in his hands,

To hurl upon their heads that break his law.

Sec. Murd. And that same vengeance doth he hurl on thee,

For false forswearing and for murder too:

Thou didst receive the holy sacrament,

To fight in quarrel of the house of Lancaster.

First Murd. And, like a traitor to the name of God, 210

Didst break that vow; and with thy treacherous blade

Unrip'dst the bowels of thy sovereign's son.

Sec. Murd. Whom thou wert sworn to cherish and defend.

First Murd. How canst thou urge God's dreadful law to us,

When thou hast broke it in so dear degree?

Clar. Alas! for whose sake did I that ill deed?

For Edward, for my brother, for his sake:

Why, sirs,

He sends not yet to murder me for this;

For in this sin he is as deep as I. 220

If God will be revenged for this deed,

O, know you yet, he doth it publicly:

Take not the quarrel from his powerful arm;

He needs no indirect nor lawless course

To cut off those that have offended him.

First Murd. Who made thee, then a bloody minister,

When gallant-springing brave Plantagenet,

That princely novice, was struck dead by thee?

Clar. My brother's love, the devil, and my rage.

First Murd. Thy brother's love, our duty, and thy fault, 230

Provoke us hither now to slaughter thee.

Clar. Oh, if you love my brother, hate not me;

I am his brother, and I love him well.

If you be hired for meed, go back again,

And I will send you to my brother Gloucester,

Who shall reward you better for my life

Than Edward will for tidings of my death.

Sec. Murd. You are deceived, your brother Gloucester hates you.

Clar. O, no, he loves me, and he holds me dear:

Go you to him from me.

Both. Ay, so we will 240

Clar. Tell him, when that our princely father York

Bless'd his three sons with his victorious arm.

And charged us from his soul to love each other,

He little thought of this divided friendship:

Bid Gloucester think of this, and he will weep.

First Murd. Ay, millstones; as he lesson'd us to weep.

Clar. O, do not slander him, for he is kind.

First Murd. Right,

As snow in harvest. Thou deceivest thyself: 'Tis he that sent us hither now to slaughter thee. 250

Clar. It cannot be; for when I parted with him,

He hugg'd me in his arms, and swore, with sobs,

That he would labour my delivery.

Sec. Murd. Why, so he doth, now he delivers thee

From this world's thralldom to the joys of heaven.

First Murd. Make peace with God, for you must die, my lord.

Clar. Hast thou that holy feeling in thy soul, To counsel me to make my peace with God,

And art thou yet to thy own soul so blind,

That thou wilt war with God by murdering me?

Ah, sirs, consider, he that set you on 261

To do this deed will hate you for the deed

Sec. Murd. What shall we do?

Clar. Relent, and save your souls.

First Murd. Relent! 'tis cowardly and womanish.

Clar. Not to relent is beastly, savage, devilish.

Which of you, if you were a prince's son,

Being pent from liberty, as I am now,

If two such murderers as yourselves came to you,

Would not entreat for life?

My friend, I spy some pity in thy looks; 270

O, if thine eye be not a flatterer,

Come thou on my side, and entreat for me,

As you would beg, were you in my distress:

A begging prince what beggar pities not?

Sec. Murd. Look behind you, my lord.

First Murd. Take that and that: if all this will not do, [Stabs him.

I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.

[Exit, with the body.

Sec. Murd. A bloody deed, and desperately dispatch'd!

How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands

Of this most grievous guilty murder done! 280

Re-enter First Murderer.

First Murd. How now! what mean'st thou, that thou help'st me not?

By heavens, the duke shall know how slack thou art!

Sec. Murd. I would he knew that I had saved his brother!

Take thou the fee, and tell him what I say;

For I repent me that the duke is slain. *[Exit. First Murd.]* So do not I: go, coward as thou art.

Now must I hide his body in some hole,
Until the duke take order for his burial:
And when I have my meed, I must away;
For this will out, and here I must not stay.
[Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *London. The palace.*

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD sick, QUEEN ELIZABETH, DORSET, RIVERS, HASTINGS, BUCKINGHAM, GREY, and others.

K. Edw. Why, so: now I have done a good day's work:

You peers, continue this united league:
I every day expect an embassy
From my redeemer to redeem me hence;
And now in peace my soul shall part to heaven,

Since I have set my friends at peace on earth.
Rivers and Hastings, take each other's hand;
Dissemble not your hatred, swear your love.

Riv. By heaven, my heart is purged from grudging hate;

And with my hand, I seal my true heart's love.

Hast. So thrive I, as I truly swear the like!

K. Edw. Take heed you dally not before your king;

Lest he that is the supreme King of kings
Confound your hidden falsehood, and award
Either of you to be the other's end.

Hast. So prosper I, as I swear perfect love!

Riv. And I, as I love Hastings with my heart!

K. Edw. Madam, yourself are not exempt in this,

Nor your son Dorset, Buckingham, nor you;
You have been factious one against the other. 20
Wife, love Lord Hastings, let him kiss your hand;

And what you do, do it unfeignedly.

Q. Eliz. Here, Hastings; I will never more remember

Our former hatred, so thrive I and mine!

K. Edw. Dorset, embrace him; Hastings, love lord marquess.

Dor. This interchange of love, I here protest,
Upon my part shall be unviolable.

Hast. And so swear I, my lord.

[They embrace]

K. Edw. Now, princely Buckingham, seal thou this league

With thy embracements to my wife's allies, 30
And make me happy in your unity.

Buck. Whenever Buckingham doth turn his hate

On you or yours *[to the Queen]*, but with all duteous love

Doth cherish you and yours, God punish me
With hate in those where I expect most love!
When I have most need to employ a friend,
And most assured that he is a friend,
Deep, hollow, treacherous, and full of guile,
Be he unto me! this do I beg of God,
When I am cold in zeal to you or yours. 40

[They embrace.]

K. Edw. A pleasing cordial, princely Buckingham,

Is this thy vow unto my sickly heart.

There wanteth now our brother Gloucester here,
To make the perfect period of this peace.

Buck. And, in good time, here comes the noble duke.

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Good morrow to my sovereign king and queen;

And, princely peers, a happy time of day!

K. Edw. Happy, indeed, as we have spent the day.

Brother, we have done deeds of charity;
Made peace of enmity, fair love of hate, 50
Between these swelling wrong-incensed peers.

Glou. A blessed labour, my most sovereign liege:

Amongst this princely heap, if any here,
By false intelligence, or wrong surmise,
Hold me a foe;

If I unwittingly, or in my rage,
Have aught committed that is hardly borne
By any in this presence, I desire
To reconcile me to his friendly peace:

'Tis death to me to be at enmity; 60
I hate it, and desire all good men's love.

First, madam, I entreat true peace of you,
Which I will purchase with my duteous service;

Of you, my noble cousin Buckingham,
If ever any grudge were lodged between us;

Of you, Lord Rivers, and, Lord Grey, of you;
That all without desert have frown'd on me;

Dukes, earls, lords, gentlemen; indeed, of all.
I do not know that Englishman alive

With whom my soul is any jot at odds 70
More than the infant that is born to-night:

I thank my God for my humility.

Q. Eliz. A holy day shall this be kept hereafter:

I would to God all strifes were well compounded,

My sovereign liege, I do beseech your majesty
To take our brother Clarence to your grace.

Glou. Why, madam, have I offer'd love for this,

To be so flouted in this royal presence?
Who knows not that the noble duke is dead?

[They all start.]

You do him injury to scorn his corse. 80
Riv. Who knows not he is dead! who knows he is?
Q. Eliz. All-seeing heaven, what a world is this!
Buck. Look I so pale, Lord Dorset, as the rest?
Dor. Ay, my good lord; and no one in this presence
 But his red colour hath forsook his cheeks.
K. Edw. Is Clarence dead? the order was reversed.
Glou. But he, poor soul, by your first order died,
 And that a winged Mercury did bear;
 Some tardy cripple bore the countermand,
 That came too lag to see him buried. 90
 God grant that some, less noble and less loyal,
 Nearer in bloody thoughts, but not in blood,
 Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did,
 And yet go current from suspicion!

Enter DERBY.

Der. A boon, my sovereign, for my service done!
K. Edw. I pray thee, peace: my soul is full of sorrow.
Der. I will not rise, unless your highness grant.
K. Edw. Then speak at once what is it thou demand'st.
Der. The forfeit, sovereign, of my servant's life;
 Who slew to-day a riotous gentleman 100
 Lately attendant on the Duke of Norfolk.
K. Edw. Have I a tongue to doom my brother's death,
 And shall the same give pardon to a slave?
 My brother slew no man; his fault was thought,
 And yet his punishment was cruel death.
 Who sued to me for him? who, in my rage,
 Knee'd at my feet, and bade me be advised?
 Who spake of brotherhood? who spake of love?
 Who told me how the poor soul did forsake
 The mighty Warwick, and did fight for me?
 Who told me, in the field by Tewksbury, 111
 When Oxford had me down, he rescued me.
 And said, 'Dear brother, live, and be a king'?
 Who told me, when we both lay in the field
 Frozen almost to death, how he did lap me
 Even in his own garments, and gave himself
 All thin and naked, to the numb cold night?
 All this from my remembrance brutish wrath
 Sinfully pluck'd, and not a man of you
 Had so much grace to put it in my mind. 120
 But when your carters or your waiting-vassals
 Have done a drunken slaughter, and defaced
 The precious image of our dear Redeemer,

You straight are on your knees for pardon,
 pardon;
 And I, unjustly too, must grant it you:
 But for my brother not a man would speak,
 Nor I, ungracious, speak unto myself
 For him, poor soul. The proudest of you all
 Have been beholding to him in his life;
 Yet none of you would once plead for his life.
 O God, I fear thy justice will take hold 131
 On me, and you, and mine, and yours for this!
 Come, Hastings, help me to my closet. Oh,
 poor Clarence!
[Exeunt some with King and Queen.]
Glou. This is the fruit of rashness!
 Mark'd you not
 How that the guilty kindred of the queen
 Look'd pale when they did hear of Clarence'
 death?
 O, they did urge it still unto the king!
 God will revenge it. But come, let us in,
 To comfort Edward with our company.

Buck. We wait upon your grace. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *The palace.*

Enter the DUCHESS OF YORK, with the two children of CLARENCE.

Boy. Tell me, good grandam, is our father dead?
Duch. No, boy.
Boy. Why do you wring your hands, and beat your breast,
 And cry 'O Clarence, my unhappy son!'
Girl. Why do you look on us, and shake your head,
 And call us wretches, orphans, castaways,
 If that our noble father be alive?
Duch. My pretty cousins, you mistake me much;
 I do lament the sickness of the king,
 As loath to lose him, not your father's death;
 It were lost sorrow to wail one that's lost. 11
Boy. Then, grandam, you conclude that he is dead.
 The king my uncle is to blame for this:
 God will revenge it; whom I will importune
 With daily prayers all to that effect.
Girl. And so will I.
Duch. Peace, children, peace! the king doth love you well:
 Incapable and shallow innocents,
 You cannot guess who caused your father's death.
Boy. Grandam, we can; for my good uncle Gloucester 20
 Told me, the king, provoked by the queen,
 Devised impeachments to imprison him:
 And when my uncle told me so, he wept,
 And hugg'd me in his arm, and kindly kiss'd
 my cheek;

Bade me rely on him as on my father,
And he would love me dearly as his child.

Duch. Oh, that deceit should steal such
gentle shapes,
And with a virtuous vizard hide foul guile!
He is my son; yea, and therein my shame;
Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit. 30

Boy. Think you my uncle did dissemble,
grandam?

Duch. Ay, boy.

Boy. I cannot think it. Hark! what noise
is this?

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, with her hair about
her ears; *RIVERS* and *DORSET* after her.

Q. Eliz. Oh, who shall hinder me to wail
and weep,
To chide my fortune, and torment myself?
I'll join with black despair against my soul,
And to myself become an enemy.

Duch. What means this scene of rude im-
patience?

Q. Eliz. To make an act of tragic violence:
Edward, my lord, your son, our king, is dead.
Why grow the branches now the root is wither'd?
Why wither not the leaves the sap being gone?
If you will live, lament; if die, be brief,
That our swift-winged souls may catch the
king's;

Or, like obedient subjects, follow him
To his new kingdom of perpetual rest.

Duch. Ah, so much interest have I in thy
sorrow

As I had title in thy noble husband!
I have bewept a worthy husband's death,
And lived by looking on his images: 50
But now two mirrors of his princely semblance
Are crack'd in pieces by malignant death,
And I for comfort have but one false glass,
Which grieves me when I see my shame in him.
Thou art a widow; yet thou art a mother,
And hast the comfort of thy children left thee:
But death hath snatch'd my husband from
mine arms,

And pluck'd two crutches from my feeble limbs,
Edward and Clarence. O, what cause have I,
Thine being but a moiety of my grief, 60
To overgo thy plaints and drown thy cries!

Boy. Good aunt, you wept not for our
father's death;
How can we aid you with our kindred tears?

Girl. Our fatherless distress was left un-
moan'd;

Your widow-dolour likewise be unwept!

Q. Eliz. Give me no help in lamentation;
I am not barren to bring forth complaints:
All springs reduce their currents to mine eyes,
That I, being govern'd by the watery moon,

May send forth plenteous tears to drown the
world! 70

Oh for my husband, for my dear lord Edward!

Chil. Oh for our father, for our dear lord
Clarence!

Duch. Alas for both, both mine, Edward
and Clarence!

Q. Eliz. What stay had I but Edward? and
he's gone,

Chil. What stay had we but Clarence?
and he's gone,

Duch. What stays had I but they? and
they are gone.

Q. Eliz. Was never widow had so dear a loss!

Chil. Were never orphans had so dear a loss!

Duch. Was never mother had so dear a loss!
Alas, I am the mother of these moans! 80

Their woes are parcell'd, mine are general.

She for an Edward weeps, and so do I;

I for a Clarence weep, so doth not she:

These babes for Clarence weep, and so do I;

I for an Edward weep, so do not they:

Alas, you three, on me, threefold distress'd,

Pour all your tears! I am your sorrow's nurse,
And I will pamper it with lamentations.

Dor. Comfort, dear mother; God is much
displeased

That you take with unthankfulness his doing:
In common worldly things, 'tis call'd un-
grateful, 91

With dull unwillingness to repay a debt

Which with a bounteous hand was kindly
lent;

Much more to be thus opposite with heaven,
For it requires the royal debt it lent you.

Riv. Madam, bethink you, like a careful
mother,

Of the young prince your son: send straight
for him;

Let him be crown'd; in him your comfort lives:

Drown desperate sorrow in dead Edward's grave,

And plant your joys in living Edward's throne.

Enter GLOUCESTER, BUCKINGHAM, DERBY,
HASTINGS, and RATCLIFF.

Glou. Madam, have comfort: all of us
have cause 101

To wail the dimming of our shining star:

But none can cure their harms by wailing them,

Madam, my mother, I do cry you mercy;

I did not see your grace: humbly on my knee
I crave your blessing.

Duch. God bless thee; and put meekness in
thy mind,

Love, charity, obedience, and true duty!

Glou. [*Aside*] Amen; and make me die a
good old man!

That is the butt-end of a mother's blessing:
I marvel why her grace did leave it out.

Buck. You cloudy princes and heart-sorrowing peers,
That bear this mutual heavy load of moan,
Now cheer each other in each other's love:
Though we have spent our harvest of this king,
We are to reap the harvest of his son.
The broken rancour of your high-swoln hearts,
But lately splinter'd, knit, and join'd together,
Must gently be preserved, cherish'd, and kept:
Me seemeth good, that, with some little train,
Forthwith from Ludlow the young prince be fetch'd 121
Hither to London, to be crown'd our king.
Riv. Why with some little train, my Lord of Buckingham?
Buck. Marry, my lord, lest, by a multitude,
The new-heal'd wound of malice should break out;
Which would be so much the more dangerous,
By how much the estate is green and yet un-govern'd:
Where every horse bears his commanding rein,
And may direct his course as please himself,
As well the fear of harm, as harm apparent,
In my opinion, ought to be prevented. 131
Glou. I hope the king made peace with all of us;
And the compact is firm and true in me.
Riv. And so in me; and so, I think, in all:
Yet, since it is but green, it should be put
To no apparent likelihood of breach,
Which haply by much company might be urged:
Therefore I say with noble Buckingham,
That it is meet so few should fetch the prince.
Hast. And so say I. 140
Glou. Then be it so; and go we to determine
Who they shall be that straight shall post to Ludlow.
Madam, and you, my mother, will you go
To give your censures in this weighty business?
Q. Eliz. } With all our hearts.
Duch. }
[*Exeunt all but Buckingham and Gloucester.*
Buck. My lord, whoever journeys to the prince,
For God's sake, let not us two be behind;
For, by the way, I'll sort occasion,
As index to the story we late talk'd of,
To part the queen's proud kindred from the king. 150
Glou. My other self, my counsel's consistency,
My oracle, my prophet! My dear cousin,
I, like a child, will go by thy direction.
Towards Ludlow then, for we'll not stay behind. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *London. A street.*

Enter two Citizens, meeting.

First Cit. Neighbour, well met: whither away so fast?

Sec. Cit. I promise you, I scarcely know myself:

Hear you the news abroad?

First Cit. Ay, that the king is dead.

Sec. Cit. Bad news, by'r lady; seldom comes the better:

I fear, I fear 'twill prove a troublous world.

Enter another Citizen.

Third Cit. Neighbours, God speed!

First Cit. Give you good morrow, sir.

Third Cit. Doth this news hold of good King Edward's death?

Sec. Cit. Ay, sir, it is too true; God help the while!

Third Cit. Then, masters, look to see a troublous world.

First Cit. No, no; by God's good grace his son shall reign. 10

Third Cit. Woe to that land that's govern'd by a child!

Sec. Cit. In him there is a hope of government,

That in his nonage council under him,
And in his full and ripen'd years himself,
No doubt, shall then and till then govern well.

First Cit. So stood the state when Henry the Sixth

Was crown'd in Paris but at nine months old.

Third Cit. Stood the state so? No, no, good friends, God wot;

For then this land was famously enrich'd
With politic grave counsel; then the king 20
Had virtuous uncles to protect his grace.

First Cit. Why, so hath this, both by the father and mother.

Third Cit. Better it were they all came by the father,

Or by the father there were none at all;
For emulation now, who shall be nearest,
Will touch us all too near, if God prevent not,
O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester!
And the queen's sons and brothers haught and proud:

And were they to be ruled, and not to rule.
This sickly land might solace as before. 30

First Cit. Come, come, we fear the worst; all shall be well.

Third Cit. When clouds appear, wise men put on their cloaks;

When great leaves fall, the winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth.
All may be well; but, if God sort it so.

'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

Sec. Cit. Truly, the souls of men are full of dread:

Ye cannot reason almost with a man

That looks not heavily and full of fear. 40

Third Cit. Before the times of change, still is it so:

By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust

Ensuing dangers; as, by proof, we see

The waters swell before a boisterous storm.

But leave it all to God. Whither away?

Sec. Cit. Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

Third Cit. And so was I: I'll bear you company. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *London. The palace.*

Enter the ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, the young DUKE OF YORK, QUEEN ELIZABETH, and the DUCHESS OF YORK.

Arch. Last night, I hear, they lay at Northampton;

At Stony-Stratford will they be to-night:

To-morrow, or next day, they will be here.

Duch. I long with all my heart to see the prince:

I hope he is much grown since last I saw him.

Q. Eliz. But I hear, no; they say my son of York

Hath almost overta'en him in his growth.

York. Ay, mother; but I would not have it so.

Duch. Why, my young cousin, it is good to grow.

York. Grandam, one night, as we did sit at supper, 10

My uncle Rivers talk'd how I did grow

More than my brother: 'Ay,' quoth my uncle Gloucester,

'Small herbs have grace, great weeds do grow apace:'

And since, methinks, I would not grow so fast, Because sweet flowers are slow and weeds make haste.

Duch. Good faith, good faith, the saying did not hold

In him that did object the same to thee:

He was the wretched'st thing when he was young,

So long a-growing and so leisurely,

That, if this rule were true, he should be gracious. 20

Arch. Why, madam, so, no doubt, he is.

Duch. I hope he is; but yet let mothers doubt.

York. Now, by my troth, if I had been remember'd,

I could have given my uncle's grace a flout,

To touch his growth nearer than he touch'd mine.

Duch. How, my pretty York? I pray thee, let me hear it.

York. Marry, they say my uncle grew so fast

That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old: 'Twas full two years ere I could get a tooth.

Grandam, this would have been a biting jest.

Duch. I pray thee, pretty York, who told thee this?

York. Grandam, his nurse.

Duch. His nurse! why, she was dead ere thou wert born.

York. If 'twere not she, I cannot tell who told me.

Q. Eliz. A parlous boy: go to, you are too shrewd.

Arch. Good madam, be not angry with the child.

Q. Eliz. Pitchers have ears.

Enter a Messenger.

Arch. Here comes a messenger. What news?

Mess. Such news, my lord, as grieves me to unfold.

Q. Eliz. How fares the prince?

Mess. Well, madam, and in health. 40

Duch. What is thy news then?

Mess. Lord Rivers and Lord Grey are sent to Pomfret,

With them Sir Thomas Vaughan, prisoners.

Duch. Who hath committed them?

Mess. The mighty dukes Gloucester and Buckingham.

Q. Eliz. For what offence?

Mess. The sum of all I can, I have disclosed; Why or for what these nobles were committed is all unknown to me, my gracious lady.

Q. Eliz. Ay me, I see the downfall of our house!

The tiger now hath seized the gentle hind; 50 Insulting tyranny begins to jet

Upon the innocent and aweless throne:

Welcome, destruction, death, and massacre!

I see, as in a map, the end of all.

Duch. Accursed and unquiet wrangling days,

How many of you have mine eyes beheld!

My husband lost his life to get the crown;

And often up and down my sons were toss'd,

For me to joy and weep their gain and loss:

And being seated, and domestic broils 60

Clean over-blown, themselves, the conquerors.

Make war upon themselves; blood against blood,

Self against self: O, preposterous

And frantic outrage, end thy damned spleen;

Or let me die, to look on death no more!

Q. Eliz. Come, come, my boy; we will to sanctuary.
Madam, farewell.
Duch. I'll go along with you.
Q. Eliz. You have no cause.
Arch. My gracious lady, go;
 And thither bear your treasure and your goods.
 For my part, I'll resign unto your grace 70
 The seal I keep: and so betide to me
 As well I tender you and all of yours!
 Come, I'll conduct you to the sanctuary.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *London. A street*

The trumpets sound. Enter the young PRINCE, the Dukes of GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, CARDINAL BOURCHIER, CATESBY, and others.

Buck. Welcome, sweet prince, to London, to your chamber.

Glou. Welcome, dear cousin, my thoughts' sovereign:

The weary way hath made you melancholy.

Prince. No, uncle; but our crosses on the way

Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy:
 I want more uncles here to welcome me.

Glou. Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of your years

Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit:
 Nor more can you distinguish of a man
 Than of his outward show; which, God he knows, 10

Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.
 Those uncles which you want were dangerous;
 Your grace attended to their sugar'd words,
 But look'd not on the poison of their hearts:
 God keep you from them, and from such false friends!

Prince. God keep me from false friends!
 but they were none.

Glou. My lord, the mayor of London comes to greet you.

Enter the Lord Mayor, and his train.

May. God bless your grace with health and happy days!

Prince. I thank you, good my lord; and thank you all.

I thought my mother, and my brother York,
 Would long ere this have met us on the way:
 Fie, what a slug is Hastings, that he come not
 To tell us whether they will come or no!

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Buck. And, in good time, here comes the sweating lord.

Prince. Welcome, my lord: what, will our mother come?

Hast. On what occasion, God he knows, not I,

The queen your mother, and your brother York,
 Have taken sanctuary: the tender prince
 Would fain have come with me to meet your grace,

But by his mother was perforce withheld. 30

Buck. Fie, what an indirect and peevish course

Is this of hers! Lord cardinal, will your grace
 Persuade the queen to send the Duke of York
 Unto his princely brother presently?

If she deny, Lord Hastings, go with him,
 And from her jealous arms pluck him perforce.

Card. My Lord of Buckingham, if my weak oratory

Can from his mother win the Duke of York,
 Anon expect him here; but if she be obdurate
 To mild entreaties, God in heaven forbid 40

We should infringe the holy privilege
 Of blessed sanctuary! not for all this land

Would I be guilty of so deep a sin.

Buck. You are too senseless-obstinate, my lord,

Too ceremonious and traditional:
 Weigh it but with the grossness of this age,
 You break not sanctuary in seizing him.

The benefit thereof is always granted
 To those whose dealings have deserved the place,
 And those who have the wit to claim the place:
 This prince hath neither claim'd it nor de-
 served it; 51

And therefore, in mine opinion, cannot have it:
 Then, taking him from thence that is not there,
 You break no privilege nor charter there.

Oft have I heard of sanctuary men;
 But sanctuary children ne'er till now.

Card. My lord, you shall o'er-rule my mind for once.

Come on, Lord Hastings, will you go with me?

Hast. I go, my lord.

Prince. Good lords, make all the speedy haste you may. 60

[*Exeunt Cardinal and Hastings.*

Say, uncle Gloucester, if our brother come,
 Where shall we sojourn till our coronation?

Glou. Where it seems best unto your royal self.

If I may counsel you, some day or two
 Your highness shall repose you at the Tower:
 Then where you please, and shall be thought
 most fit

For your best health and recreation.

Prince. I do not like the Tower of any place.
 Did Julius Cæsar build that place, my lord?

Buck. He did, my gracious lord, begin that place; 70

Which, since, succeeding ages have re-edified.

Prince. Is it upon record, or else reported
Successively from age to age, he built it?

Buck. Upon record, my gracious lord.

Prince. But say, my lord, it were not
register'd,

Methinks the truth should live from age to age,
As 'twere retail'd to all posterity,
Even to the general all-ending day.

Glou. [Aside] So wise so young, they say,
do never live long.

Prince. What say you, uncle? 80

Glou. I say, without characters, fame lives
long.

[Aside] Thus, like the formal vice, Iniquity,
moralize two meanings in one word.

Prince. That Julius Cæsar was a famous
man;

With what his valour did enrich his wit,
His wit set down to make his valour live:
Death makes no conquest of this conqueror;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.
I'll tell you what, my cousin Buckingham,—

Buck. What, my gracious lord? 90

Prince. An if I live until I be a man,
I'll win our ancient right in France again,
Or die a soldier, as I lived a king.

Glou. [Aside] Short summers lightly have
a forward spring.

Enter young YORK, HASTINGS, and the
CARDINAL.

Buck. Now, in good time, here comes the
Duke of York.

Prince. Richard of York! how fares our
loving brother?

York. Well, my dread lord; so must I call
you now.

Prince. Ay, brother, to our grief, as it is
yours:

Too late he died that might have kept that title,
Which by his death hath lost much majesty.

Glou. How fares our cousin, noble Lord
of York? 101

York. I thank you, gentle uncle. O, my lord,
You said that idle weeds are fast in growth:
The prince my brother hath outgrown me far.

Glou. He hath, my lord.

York. And therefore is he idle?

Glou. O, my fair cousin, I must not say so.

York. Then he is more beholding to you
than I.

Glou. He may command me as my sovereign;
But you have power in me as in a kinsman.

York. I pray you, uncle, give me this dag-
ger.

Glou. My dagger, little cousin? with all
my heart. 111

Prince. A beggar, brother?

York. Of my kind uncle, that I know will
give;

And being but a toy, which is no grief to give.

Glou. A greater gift than that I'll give my
cousin.

York. A greater gift! O, that's the sword
to it.

Glou. Ay, gentle cousin, were it light enough.

York. O, then, I see, you will part but
with light gifts;

In weightier things you'll say a beggar nay.

Glou. It is too heavy for your grace to
wear.

York. I weigh it lightly, were it heavier.

Glou. What, would you have my weapon,
little lord?

York. I would, that I might thank you as
you call me.

Glou. How?

York. Little.

Prince. My Lord of York will still be
cross in talk:

Uncle, your grace knows how to bear with him.

York. You mean, to bear me, not to bear
with me:

Uncle, my brother mocks both you and me;

Because that I am little, like an ape, 130

He thinks that you should bear me on your
shoulders.

Buck. With what a sharp-provided wit he
reasons!

To mitigate the scorn he gives his uncle,

He prettily and aptly taunts himself:

So cunning and so young is wonderful.

Glou. My lord, will't please you pass along?

Myself and my good cousin Buckingham

Will to your mother, to entreat of her

To meet you at the Tower and welcome you.

York. What, will you go unto the Tower,
my lord? 140

Prince. My lord protector needs will have
it so.

York. I shall not sleep in quiet at the
Tower.

Glou. Why, what should you fear?

York. Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost:
My grandam told me he was murder'd there.

Prince. I fear no uncles dead.

Glou. Nor none that live, I hope.

Prince. An if they live, I hope I need not
fear.

But come, my lord; and with a heavy heart,
Thinking on them, go I unto the Tower. 150

[A Sennet. Exeunt all but Gloucester,
Buckingham and Catesby.]

Buck. Think you, my lord, this little prat-
ing York

Was not incensed by his subtle mother
To taunt and scorn you thus opprobriously?

Glou. No doubt, no doubt: O, 'tis a
parlous boy;
Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable:
He is all the mother's, from the top to toe.

Buck. Well, let them rest. Come hither,
Catesby.

Thou art sworn as deeply to effect what we
intend

As closely to conceal what we impart: 159
Thou know'st our reasons urged upon the way;
What think'st thou? is it not an easy matter
To make William Lord Hastings of our mind,
For the instalment of this noble duke
In the seat royal of this famous isle?

Cate. He for his father's sake so loves the
prince,
That he will not be won to aught against him.

Buck. What think'st thou, then, of Stanley?
what will he?

Cate. He will do all in all as Hastings doth.

Buck. Well, then, no more but this: go,
gentle Catesby,

And, as it were far off, sound thou Lord
Hastings, 170

How he doth stand affected to our purpose;
And summon him to-morrow to the Tower,
To sit about the coronation.

If thou dost find him tractable to us,
Encourage him, and show him all our reasons:
If he be leaden, icy-cold, unwilling,
Be thou so too; and so break off your talk,
And give us notice of his inclination:
For we to-morrow hold divided councils,
Wherein thyself shalt highly be employ'd. 180

Glou. Commend me to Lord William: tell
him, Catesby,

His ancient knot of dangerous adversaries
To-morrow are let blood at Pomfret-castle;
And bid my friend, for joy of this good news,
Give Mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more.

Buck. Good Catesby, go effect this busi-
ness soundly.

Cate. My good lords both, with all the
heed I may.

Glou. Shall we hear from you, Catesby,
ere we sleep?

Cate. You shall, my lord.

Glou. At Crosby Place, there shall you
find us both. [Exit Catesby. 190

Buck. Now, my lord, what shall we do, if
we perceive

Lord Hastings will not yield to our complots?

Glou. Chop off his head, man; somewhat
we will do:

And, look, when I am king, claim thou of me
The earldom of Hereford, and the moveables
Whereof the king my brother stood possess'd.

Buck. I'll claim that promise at your
grace's hands.

Glou. And look to have it yielded with all
willingness.

Come, let us sup betimes, that afterwards
We may digest our complots in some form.

[Exeunt]

SCENE II. Before Lord Hastings' house.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. What, ho! my lord!

Hast. [Within] Who knocks at the door?

Mess. A messenger from the Lord Stanley.

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Hast. What is 't o'clock?

Mess. Upon the stroke of four.

Hast. Cannot thy master sleep these tedious
nights?

Mess. So it should seem by that I have to
say.

First, he commends him to your noble lord-
ship.

Hast. And then?

Mess. And then he sends you word 10
He dreamt to-night the boar had razed his
helm:

Besides, he says there are two councils held;
And that may be determined at the one
Which may make you and him to rue at the
other.

Therefore he sends to know your lordship's
pleasure,

If presently you will take horse with him,
And with all speed post with him toward the
north,

To shun the danger that his soul divines.

Hast. Go, fellow, go, return unto thy lord;
Bid him not fear the separated councils: 20
His honour and myself are at the one,
And at the other is my servant Catesby;
Where nothing can proceed that toucheth us
Whereof I shall not have intelligence.

Tell him his fears are shallow, wanting in-
stance:

And for his dreams, I wonder he is so fond
To trust the mockery of unquiet slumbers:
To fly the boar before the boar pursues,

Were to incense the boar to follow us
And make pursuit where he did mean no
chase.

Go, bid thy master rise and come to me; 31
And we will both together to the Tower,
Where, he shall see, the boar will use us
kindly.

Mess. My gracious lord, I'll tell him what
you say. [Exit.]

Enter CATESBY.

Cate. Many good morrows to my noble
lord!

Hast. Good morrow, Catesby; you are early stirring:
What news, what news, in this our tottering state?

Cate. It is a reeling world, indeed, my lord;
And I believe 'twill never stand upright
Till Richard wear the garland of the realm.

Hast. How! wear the garland! dost thou mean the crown?

Cate. Ay, my good lord.

Hast. I'll have this crown of mine cut from my shoulders
Ere I will see the crown so foul misplaced.
But canst thou guess that he doth aim at it?

Cate. Ay, on my life; and hopes to find you forward
Upon his party for the gain thereof:
And thereupon he sends you this good news,
That this same very day your enemies,
The kindred of the queen, must die at Pomfret.

Hast. Indeed, I am no mourner for that news, 51
Because they have been still mine enemies:
But, that I'll give my voice on Richard's side,

To bar my master's heirs in true descent,
God knows I will not do it, to the death.

Cate. God keep your lordship in that gracious mind!

Hast. But I shall laugh at this a twelve-month hence,
That they who brought me in my master's hate,
I live to look upon their tragedy
I tell thee, Catesby,— 60

Cate. What, my lord?

Hast. Ere a fortnight make me elder,
I'll send some packing that yet think not on it.

Cate. 'Tis a vile thing to die, my gracious lord,

When men are unprepared and look not for it.
Hast. O monstrous, monstrous! and so falls it out

With Rivers, Vaughan, Grey: and so 'twill do

With some men else, who think themselves as safe

As thou and I; who, as thou know'st, are dear
To princely Richard and to Buckingham. 70

Cate. The princes both make high account of you;

[*Aside*] For they account his head upon the bridge.

Hast. I know they do; and I have well deserved it.

Enter LORD STANLEY.

Come on, come on; where is your boar-spear, man?

Fear you the boar, and go so unprovided?

Stan. My lord, good morrow; good morrow, Catesby:

You may jest on, but, by the holy rood,
I do not like these several councils, I.

Hast. My lord,
I hold my life as dear as you do yours; 80
And never in my life, I do protest,
Was it more precious to me than 'tis now:
Think you, but that I know our state secure,
I would be so triumphant as I am?

Stan. The lords at Pomfret, when they rode from London,
Were jocund, and supposed their state was sure,

And they indeed had no cause to mistrust;
But yet, you see, how soon the day o'ercast.
This sudden stab of rancour I misdoubt:
Pray God, I say, I prove a needless coward!
What, shall we toward the Tower? the day is spent.

Hast. Come, come, have with you. Wot you what, my lord?
To-day the lords you talk of are beheaded.

Stan. They, for their truth, might better wear their heads
Than some that have accused them wear their hats.

But come, my lord, let us away.

Enter a Pursuivant.

Hast. Go on before; I'll talk with this good fellow.

[*Exeunt Stanley and Catesby.*
How now, sirrah! how goes the world with thee?

Purs. The better that your lordship please to ask.

Hast. I tell thee, man, 'tis better with me now 100

Than when I met thee last where now we meet:

Then was I going prisoner to the Tower,
By the suggestion of the queen's allies;
But now, I tell thee—keep it to thyself—
This day those enemies are put to death,
And I in better state than e'er I was.

Purs. God hold it, to your honour's good content!

Hast. Gramercy, fellow: there, drink that for me. [*Throws him his purse.*

Purs. God save your lordship! [*Exit.*

Enter a Priest.

Priest. Well met, my lord; I am glad to see your honour. 110

Hast. I thank thee, good Sir John, with all my heart.

I am in your debt for your last exercise;
Come the next Sabbath, and I will content
you. *[He whispers in his ear.]*

Enter BUCKINGHAM.

Buck. What, talking with a priest, lord
chamberlain?
Your friends at Pomfret, they do need the
priest;

Your honour hath no shriving work in hand.
Hast. Good faith, and when I met this
holy man,

Those men you talk of came into my mind.
What, go you toward the Tower?

Buck. I do, my lord; but long I shall not
stay: 120

I shall return before your lordship thence.

Hast. 'Tis like enough, for I stay dinner
there.

Buck. *[Aside]* And supper too, although
thou know'st it not.

Come, will you go?

Hast. I'll wait upon your lordship.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *Pomfret Castle.*

Enter SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF, *with halberds,*
carrying RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN *to*
death.

Rat. Come, bring forth the prisoners.

Riv. Sir Richard Ratcliff, let me tell thee
this:

To-day shalt thou behold a subject die
For truth, for duty, and for loyalty.

Grey. God keep the prince from all the
pack of you!

A knot you are of damned blood-suckers.

Vaug. You live that shall cry woe for this
hereafter.

Rat. Dispatch; the limit of your lives is
out.

Riv. O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody
prison,
Fatal and ominous to noble peers! 10

Within the guilty closure of thy walls
Richard the second here was hack'd to death;
And, for more slander to thy dismal seat,
We give thee up our guiltless blood to drink.

Grey. Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon
our heads,
For standing by when Richard stabb'd her
son.

Riv. Then cursed she Hastings, then cursed
she Buckingham,
Then cursed she Richard. O, remember,
God,

To hear her prayers for them, as now for us!
And for my sister and her princely sors, 20
Be satisfied, dear God, with our true blood,

Which, as thou know'st, unjustly must be spilt.
Rat. Make haste; the hour of death is
expiate.

Riv. Come, Grey, come, Vaughan, let us
all embrace:

And take our leave, until we meet in heaven.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *The Tower of London.*

Enter BUCKINGHAM, DERBY, HASTINGS, *the*
BISHOP OF ELY, RATCLIFF, LOVEL, with
others, and take their seats at a table.

Hast. My lords, at once; the cause why
we are met

Is, to determine of the coronation.

In God's name, speak: when is the royal day?

Buck. Are all things fitting for that royal
time?

Der. It is, and wants but nomination.

Ely. To-morrow, then, I judge a happy
day.

Buck. Who knows the lord protector's
mind herein?

Who is most inward with the noble duke?

Ely. Your grace, we think, should soonest
know his mind.

Buck. Who, I, my lord! we know each
other's faces, 10

But for our hearts, he knows no more of mine,
Than I of yours;

Nor I no more of his, than you of mine.

Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.

Hast. I thank his grace, I know he loves
me well;

But, for his purpose in the coronation,
I have not sounded him, nor he deliver'd

His gracious pleasure any way therein:

But you, my noble lords, may name the time;
And in the duke's behalf I'll give my voice,

Which, I presume, he'll take in gentle part.

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Ely. Now in good time, here comes the
duke himself.

Glou. My noble lords and cousins all,
good morrow.

I have been long a sleeper; but, I hope,

My absence doth neglect no great designs,

Which by my presence might have been con-
cluded.

Buck. Had not you come upon your cue,
my lord,

William Lord Hastings had pronounced your
part,—

I mean, your voice,—for crowning of the king.

Glou. Than my Lord Hastings no man
might be bolder; 30

His lordship knows me well, and loves me
well.

Hast. I thank your grace.

Glou. My lord of Ely!

Ely. My lord?

Glou. When I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there:
I do beseech you send for some of them.

Ely. Marry, and will, my lord, with all
my heart. [Exit.

Glou. Cousin of Buckingham, a word with
you. [Drawing him aside.

Catesby hath sounded Hastings in our busi-
ness,

And finds the testy gentleman so hot,
As he will lose his head ere give consent 40
His master's son, as worshipful he terms it,
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.

Buck. Withdraw you hence, my lord, I'll
follow you.

[Exit Gloucester, Buckingham following.

Der. We have not yet set down this day
of triumph.

To-morrow, in mine opinion, is too sudden;
For I myself am not so well provided
As else I would be, were the day prolong'd.

Re-enter BISHOP OF ELY.

Ely. Where is my lord protector? I have
sent for these strawberries.

Hast. His grace looks cheerfully and
smooth to-day; 50

There's some conceit or other likes him well,
When he doth bid good morrow with such
a spirit.

I think there's never a man in Christendom
That can less hide his love or hate than he;
For by his face straight shall you know his
heart.

Der. What of his heart perceive you in
his face

By any likelihood he show'd to-day?

Hast. Marry, that with no man here he is
offended;

For, were he, he had shown it in his looks.

Der. I pray God he be not, I say. 60

Re-enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM.

Glou. I pray you all, tell me what they
deserve

That do conspire my death with devilish plots
Of damned witchcraft, and that have prevail'd
Upon my body with their hellish charms?

Hast. The tender love I bear your grace,
my lord,

Makes me most forward in this noble presence
To doom the offenders, whatsoever they be:
I say, my lord, they have deserved death.

Glou. Then be your eyes the witness of
this ill:

See how I am bewitch'd; behold mine arm 70
Is, like a blasted sapling, wither'd up:

And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous
witch,

Consorted with that harlot strumpet Shore,
That by their witchcraft thus have marked me.

Hast. If they have done this thing, my
gracious lord,—

Glou. If! thou protector of this damned
strumpet,

Tellest thou me of 'ifs'? Thou art a traitor:
tellest thou me of 'ifs'?

Off with his head! Now, by Saint Paul I
swear,

I will not dine until I see the same.

Lovel and Ratcliff, look that it be done: 80

The rest, that love me, rise and follow me.

[Exeunt all but Hastings, Ratcliff, and Lovel.

Hast. Woe, woe, for England! not a whit
for me;

For I, too fond, might have prevented this.

Stanley did dream the boar did raze his helm;
But I disdain'd it, and did scorn to fly:

Three times to-day my foot-cloth horse did
stumble,

And startled, when he look'd upon the Tower,
As loath to bear me to the slaughter-house.

O, now I want the priest that spake to me:

I now repent I told the pursuivant, 90

As 'twere triumphing at mine enemies,

How they at Pomfret bloodily were butcher'd,
And I myself secure in grace and favour.

O Margaret, Margaret, now thy heavy curse
Is lighted on poor Hastings' wretched head!

Rat. Dispatch, my lord; the duke would
be at dinner:

Make a short shrift; he longs to see your head.

Hast. O momentary grace of mortal men,
Which we more hunt for than the grace of
God!

Who builds his hopes in air of your good
looks,

Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast, 101

Ready, with every nod, to tumble down
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.

Lov. Come, come, dispatch; 'tis bootless
to exclaim.

Hast. O bloody Richard! miserable Eng-
land!

I prophesy the fearfull'st time to thee

That ever wretched age hath look'd upon.

Come, lead me to the block; bear him my
head:

They smile at me that shortly shall be dead.

[Exeunt.

SCENE V. The Tower-walls.

Enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, in
rotten armour, marvellous ill-favoured.

Glou. Come, cousin, canst thou quake, and
change thy colour.

Murder thy breath in middle of a word,
And then begin again, and stop again,
As if thou wert distraught and mad with terror?

Buck. Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian;

Speak and look back, and pry on every side,
Tremble and start at wagging of a straw,
Intending deep suspicion: ghastly looks
Are at my service, like enforced smiles;
And both are ready in their offices, 10
At any time, to grace my stratagems.
But what, is Catesby gone?

Glou. He is; and, see, he brings the mayor along.

Enter the Mayor and CATESBY.

Buck. Lord mayor,—

Glou. Look to the drawbridge there!

Buck. Hark! a drum.

Glou. Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

Buck. Lord mayor, the reason we have sent—

Glou. Look back, defend thee, here are enemies.

Buck. God and our innocency defend and guard us! 20

Glou. Be patient, they are friends, Ratcliff and Lovel.

Enter LOVEL and RATCLIFF, with HASTINGS' head.

Lov. Here is the head of that ignoble traitor,

The dangerous and unsuspected Hastings.

Glou. So dear I loved the man, that I must weep.

I took him for the plainest harmless creature
That breathed upon this earth a Christian;
Made him my book, wherein my soul recorded
The history of all her secret thoughts:
So smooth he daub'd his vice with show of virtue,

That, his apparent open guilt omitted, 30
I mean, his conversation with Shore's wife,
He lived from all attainder of suspect.

Buck. Well, well, he was the covert'st shelter'd traitor

That ever lived.

Would you imagine, or almost believe,
Were 't not that, by great preservation,
We live to tell it you, the subtle traitor
This day had plotted, in the council-house
To murder me and my good Lord of Gloucester?

May. What, had he so? 40

Glou. What, think you we are Turks or infidels?

Or that we would, against the form of law,

Proceed thus rashly to the villain's death,
But that the extreme peril of the case,
The peace of England and our persons' safety,
Enforced us to this execution?

May. Now, fair befall you! he deserved his death;

And you my good lords, both have well proceeded,

To warn false traitors from the like attempts.
I never look'd for better at his hands, 50
After he once fell in with Mistress Shore.

Glou. Yet had not we determined he should die,

Until your lordship came to see his death;
Which now the loving haste of these our friends,

Somewhat against our meaning, have prevented:

Because, my lord, we would have had you heard

The traitor speak, and timorously confess
The manner and the purpose of his treason;
That you might well have signified the same
Unto the citizens, who haply may 60
Misconstrue us in him and wail his death.

May. But, my good lord, your grace's word shall serve,

As well as I had seen and heard him speak:
And doubt you not, right noble princes both,
But I'll acquaint our dutecous citizens
With all your just proceedings in this cause.

Glou. And to that end we wish'd your lordship here,

To avoid the carping censures of the world.

Buck. But since you come too late of our intents,

Yet witness what you hear we did intend: 70
And so, my good lord mayor, we bid farewell. [*Exit Mayor.*]

Glou. Go, after, after, cousin Buckingham.
The mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post:

There, at your meet'st advantage of the time,
Infer the bastardy of Edward's children:

Tell them how Edward put to death a citizen,
Only for saying he would make his son
Heir to the crown; meaning indeed his house,
Which, by the sign thereof, was termed so.

Moreover, urge his hateful luxury, 80
And bestial appetite in change of lust;
Which stretched to their servants, daughters,
wives,

Even where his lustful eye or savage heart,
Without control, listed to make his prey.

Nay, for a need, thus far come near my person:

Tell them, when that my mother went with child

Of that unsatiate Edward, noble York

My princely father then had wars in France;
And, by just computation of the time,
Found that the issue was not his begot; 90
Which well appeared in his lineaments,
Being nothing like the noble duke my father:
But touch this sparingly, as 'twere far off;
Because you know, my lord, my mother lives.

Buck. Fear not, my lord, I'll play the orator

As if the golden fee for which I plead
Were for myself: and so, my lord, adieu.

Glou. If you thrive well, bring them to
Baynard's castle;
Where you shall find me well accompanied
With reverend fathers and well-learned
bishops.

Buck. I go; and towards three or four
o'clock 101
Look for the news that the Guildhall affords.

[*Exit.*]

Glou. Go, Lovel, with all speed to Doctor
Shaw;

[*To Cate.*] Go thou to Friar Penker; bid
them both

Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.
[*Exeunt all but Gloucester.*]

Now will I in, to take some privy order,
To draw the brats of Clarence out of sight;
And to give notice, that no manner of person
At any time have recourse unto the princes.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE VI. *The same. A street.*

Enter a Scrivener, with a paper in his hand.

Scriv. This is the indictment of the good
Lord Hastings;
Which in a set hand fairly is engross'd.
That it may be this day read o'er in Paul's.
And mark how well the sequel hangs to-
gether:

Eleven hours I spent to write it over,
For yesternight by Catesby was it brought me;
The precedent was full as long a-doing:
And yet within these five hours lived Lord
Hastings,

Untainted, unexamined, free, at liberty.
Here's a good world the while! Why who's
so gross, 10

That seeth not this palpable device?
Yet who's so blind, but says he sees it not?
Bad is the world; and all will come to nought,
When such bad dealing must be seen in
thought. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VII. *Baynard's Castle.*

*Enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, at
several doors.*

Glou. How now, my lord, what say the
citizens?

Buck. Now, by the holy mother of our
Lord,

The citizens are mum and speak not a word.

Glou. Touch'd you the bastardy of Ed-
ward's children?

Buck. I did; with his contract with Lady
Lucy,

And his contract by deputy in France;

The insatiate greediness of his desires,

And his enforcement of the city wives;

His tyranny for trifles; his own bastardy,

As being got, your father then in France, 10

And his resemblance, being not like the duke:

Withal I did infer your lineaments,

Being the right idea of your father,

Both in your form and nobleness of mind;

Laid open all your victories in Scotland,

Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,

Your bounty, virtue, fair humility;

Indeed, left nothing fitting for the purpose

Untouch'd, or slightly handled, in discourse:

And when mine oratory grew to an end, 20

I bid them that did love their country's good

Cry 'God save Richard, England's royal

king!'

Glou. Ah! and did they so?

Buck. No, so God help me, they spake not
a word;

But, like dumb statuas of breathing stones,

Gazed each on other, and look'd deadly pale.

Which when I saw, I reprehended them;

And ask'd the mayor what meant this wilful
silence:

His answer was, the people were not wont

To be spoke to but by the recorder. 30

Then he was urg'd to tell my tale again,

'Thus saith the duke, thus hath the duke in-
ferr'd;'

But nothing spake in warrant from himself.

When he had done, some followers of mine
own,

At the lower end of the hall, hurl'd up their
caps,

And some ten voices cried 'God save King
Richard!'

And thus I took the vantage of those few,

'Thanks, gentle citizens and friends.' quoth I;

'This general applause and loving shout

Argues your wisdoms and your love to Rich-
ard.'

And even here brake off, and came away. 41

Glou. What tongueless blocks were they!
would they not speak?

Buck. No, by my troth, my lord.

Glou. Will not the mayor then and his
brethren come?

Buck. The mayor is here at hand: intend
some fear;

Be not you spoke with, but by mighty suit:

And look you get a prayer-book in your hand,
And stand betwixt two churchmen, good my
lord;

For on that ground I'll build a holy descant:
And be not easily won to our request: 50
Play the maid's part, still answer nay, and
take it.

Glou. I go; and if you plead as well for
them

As I can say nay to thee for myself,
No doubt we'll bring it to a happy issue.

Buck. Go, go, up to the leads; the lord
mayor knocks. [Exit Gloucester.

Enter the Mayor and Citizens.

Welcome, my lord: I dance attendance here;
I think the duke will not be spoke withal.

Enter CATESBY.

Here comes his servant: how now, Catesby,
What says he?

Cate. My lord, he doth entreat your grace
To visit him to-morrow or next day: 60
He is within, with two right reverend fathers,
Divinely bent to meditation;
And in no worldly suit would he be moved,
To draw him from his holy exercise.

Buck. Return, good Catesby, to thy lord
again;
Tell him, myself, the mayor and citizens,
In deep designs and matters of great moment,
No less importing than our general good,
Are come to have some conference with his
grace.

Cate. I'll tell him what you say, my lord.
[Exit.

Buck. Ah, ha, my lord, this prince is not
an Edward!
He is not lolling on a lewd day-bed,
But on his knees at meditation;
Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,
But meditating with two deep divines;
Not sleeping, to engross his idle body,
But praying, to enrich his watchful soul:
Happy were England, would this gracious
prince

Take on himself the sovereignty thereof:
But, sure, I fear, we shall ne'er win him to it.

May. Marry, God forbid his grace should
say us nay!

Buck. I fear he will.

Re-enter CATESBY.

How now, Catesby, what says your lord?

Cate. My lord,
He wonders to what end you have assembled
Such troops of citizens to speak with him,
His grace not being warn'd thereof before:
My lord, he fears you mean no good to him.

Buck. Sorry I am my noble cousin should
Suspect me, that I mean no good to him:
By heaven, I come in perfect love to him; 90
And so once more return and tell his grace.

[Exit Catesby.

When holy and devout religious men
Are at their beads, 'tis hard to draw them
thence,

So sweet is zealous contemplation.

*Enter GLOUCESTER aloft, between two
Bishops. CATESBY returns.*

May. See, where he stands between two
clergymen!

Buck. Two props of virtue for a Christian
prince,

To stay him from the fall of vanity:
And see, a book of prayer in his hand,
True ornaments to know a holy man.
Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince, 100
Lent favourable ears to our request;
And pardon us the interruption
Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.

Glou. My lord, there needs no such
apology:

I rather do beseech you pardon me,
Who, earnest in the service of my God,
Neglect the visitation of my friends.
But, leaving this, what is your grace's pleas-
ure?

Buck. Even that, I hope, which pleaseth
God above,
And all good men of this ungovern'd isle. 110

Glou. I do suspect I have done some of-
fence
That seems disgracious in the city's eyes,
And that you come to reprehend my ig-
norance.

Buck. You have, my lord: would it might
please your grace,

At our entreaties, to amend that fault!

Glou. Else wherefore breathe I in a Chris-
tian land?

Buck. Then know, it is your fault that you
resign

The supreme seat, the throne majestic,
The scepter'd office of your ancestors,
Your state of fortune and your due of birth,
The lineal glory of your royal house,
To the corruption of a blemish'd stock:
Whilst, in the mildness of your sleepy thoughts,
Which here we waken to our country's good,
This noble isle doth want her proper limbs;
Her face defaced with scars of infamy,
Her royal stock graft with ignoble plants,
And almost shoulder'd in the swallowing gulf
Of blind forgetfulness and dark oblivion.
Which to recure, we heartily solicit 130
Your gracious self to take on you the charge

And kingly government of this your land,
Not as protector, steward, substitute,
Or lowly factor for another's gain;
But as successively from blood to blood,
Your right of birth, your empery, your own.
For this, consorted with the citizens,
Your very worshipful and loving friends,
And by their vehement instigation,
In this just suit come I to move your grace. 140

Glou. I know not whether to depart in
silence,

Or bitterly to speak in your reproof,
Best fitteth my degree or your condition:
If not to answer, you might haply think
Tongue-tied ambition, not replying, yielded
To bear the golden yoke of sovereignty,
Which fondly you would here impose on me;
If to reprove you for this suit of yours,
So season'd with your faithful love to me,
Then, on the other side, I check'd my friends.
Therefore, to speak, and to avoid the first, 151
And then, in speaking, not to incur the last,
Definitively thus I answer you.

Your love deserves my thanks; but my desert
Unmeritable shuns your high request,
First, if all obstacles were cut away,
And that my path were even to the crown,
As my ripe revenue and due by birth;
Yet so much is my poverty of spirit,
So mighty and so many my defects, 160
As I had rather hide me from my greatness,
Being a bark to brook no mighty sea,
Than in my greatness covet to be hid,
And in the vapour of my glory smother'd.
But, God be thanked, there's no need of me,
And much I need to help you, if need were;
The royal tree hath left us royal fruit,
Which, mellow'd by the stealing hours of
time,

Will well become the seat of majesty,
And make, no doubt, us happy by his reign.
On him I lay what you would lay on me,
The right and fortune of his happy stars;
Which God defend that I should wring from
him!

Buck. My lord, this argues conscience in
your grace;

But the respects thereof are nice and trivial,
All circumstances well considered.
You say that Edward is your brother's son:
So say we too, but not by Edward's wife;
For first he was contract to Lady Lucy—
Your mother lives a witness to that vow— 180
And afterward by substitute betroth'd
To Bona, sister to the King of France.
These both put by, a poor petitioner,
A care-crazed mother of a many children,
A beauty-waning and distressed widow,
Even in the afternoon of her best days,

Made prize and purchase of his lustful eye,
Seduced the pitch and height of all his
thoughts

To base declension and loathed bigamy:
By her, in his unlawful bed, he got 190
This Edward, whom our manners term the
prince.

More bitterly could I expostulate,
Save that, for reverence to some alive,
I give a sparing limit to my tongue;
Then, good my lord, take to your royal self
This proffer'd benefit of dignity;
If not to bless us and the land withal,
Yet to draw forth your noble ancestry
From the corruption of abusing times,
Unto a lineal true-derived course. 200

May. Do, good my lord, your citizens en-
treat you.

Buck. Refuse not, mighty lord, this prof-
fer'd love.

Cate. O, make them joyful, grant their
lawful suit!

Glou. Alas, why would you heap these
cares on me?

I am unfit for state and majesty:

I do beseech you, take it not amiss;

I cannot nor I will not yield to you,

Buck. If you refuse it,—as, in love and
zeal,

Loath to depose the child, your brother's son;
As well we know your tenderness of heart 210
And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse,
Which we have noted in you to your kin,
And egally indeed to all estates,—
Yet whether you accept our suit or no,
Your brother's son shall never reign our king;
But we will plant some other in the throne,
To the disgrace and downfall of your house:
And in this resolution here we leave you.—

Come, citizens: 'zounds! I'll entreat no more,
Glou. O, do not swear, my lord of Buck-
ingham.

[Exit Buckingham with the Citizens.]

Cate. Call them again, my lord, and ac-
cept their suit. 221

Another. Do, good my lord, lest all the
land do rue it.

Glou. Would you enforce me to a world
of care?

Well, call them again. I am not made of
stones,

But penetrable to your kind entreats,
Albeit against my conscience and my soul.

Re-enter BUCKINGHAM and the rest.

Cousin of Buckingham, and you sage, grave
men,

Since you will buckle fortune on my back,
To bear her burthen, whether I will or no.

I must have patience to endure the load: 230
But if black scandal or foul-faced reproach
Attend the sequel of your imposition,
Your mere enforcement shall acquittance me
From all the impure blots and stains thereof;
For God he knows, and you may partly see,
How far I am from the desire thereof.

May. God bless your grace! we see it,
and will say it.

Glou. In saying so, you shall but say the
truth.

Buck. Then I salute you with this kingly
title:

Long live Richard, England's royal king! 240

May. and Cit. Amen.

Buck. To-morrow will it please you to be
crown'd?

Glou. Even when you please, since you
will have it so.

Buck. To-morrow, then, we will attend
your grace:

And so most joyfully we take our leave.

Glou. Come, let us to our holy task again.
Farewell, good cousin; farewell, gentle
friends. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Before the Tower.

Enter, on one side, QUEEN ELIZABETH,
DUCHESS OF YORK, and MARQUESS OF
DORSET; on the other, ANNE, DUCHESS
OF GLOUCESTER, leading LADY MARGARET
PLANTAGENET, CLARENCE's young Daugh-
ter.

Duch. Who meets us here? my niece
Plantagenet
Led in the hand of her kind aunt of Glou-
cester?

Now, for my life, she's wandering to the
Tower,
On pure heart's love to greet the tender
princes.

Daughter, well met.

Anne. God give your graces both
A happy and a joyful time of day!

Q. Eliz. As much to you, good sister!
whither away?

Anne. No farther than the Tower; and, as
I guess,

Upon the like devotion as yourselves,
To gratulate the gentle princes there. 10

Q. Eliz. Kind sister, thanks: we'll enter
all together.

Enter BRAKENBURY.

And, in good time, here the lieutenant comes.
Master lieutenant, pray you, by your leave,

How doth the prince, and my young son of
York?

Brah. Right well, dear madam. By your
patience,

I may not suffer you to visit them;

The king hath straitly charged the contrary.

Q. Eliz. The king! why, who's that?

Brah. I cry you mercy: I mean the lord
protector.

Q. Eliz. The Lord protect him from that
kingly title! 20

Hath he set bounds betwixt their love and me?
I am their mother; who should keep me from
them?

Duch. I am their father's mother; I will
see them.

Anne. Their aunt I am in law, in love
their mother:

Then bring me to their sights; I'll bear thy
blame

And take thy office from thee, on my peril.

Brah. No, madam, no; I may not leave
it so:

I am bound by oath, and therefore pardon me.
[Exit.]

Enter LORD STANLEY.

Stan. Let me but meet you, ladies, one
hour hence,

And I'll salute your grace of York as
mother,

And reverend looker on, of two fair queens. 31

[To Anne] Come, madam, you must straight
to Westminster,

There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

Q. Eliz. O, cut my lace in sunder, that
my pent heart

May have some scope to beat, or else I swoon
With this dead-killing news!

Anne. Despiteful tidings! O unpleasing
news!

Dor. Be of good cheer: mother, how fares
your grace?

Q. Eliz. O Dorset, speak not to me, get
thee hence!

Death and destruction dog thee at the heels; 40
Thy mother's name is ominous to children.

If thou wilt outstrip death, go cross the seas,
And live with Richmond, from the reach of
hell:

Go, hie thee, hie thee from this slaughter-
house,

Lest thou increase the number of the dead;
And make me die the thrall of Margaret's
curse.

Nor mother, wife, nor England's counted
queen.

Stan. Full of wise care is this your coun-
sel. madam.

Take all the swift advantage of the hours;
You shall have letters from me to my son 50
To meet you on the way, and welcome you.
Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.

Duch. O ill-dispersing wind of misery!
O my accursed womb, the bed of death!
A cockatrice hast thou hatch'd to the world,
Whose unavowed eye is murderous.

Stan. Come, madam, come; I in all haste
was sent.

Anne. And I in all unwillingness will go.
I would to God that the inclusive verge
Of golden metal that must round my brow 60
Were red-hot steel, to sear me to the brain!
Anointed let me be with deadly venom,
And die, ere men can say, God save the
queen!

Q. Eliz. Go, go, poor soul, I envy not thy
glory;
To feed my humour, wish thyself no harm.

Anne. No! why? When he that is my
husband now
Came to me, as I follow'd Henry's corse,
When scarce the blood was well wash'd from
his hands

Which issued from my other angel husband
And that dead saint which then I weeping
follow'd; 70

O, when, I say, I look'd on Richard's face,
This was my wish: 'Be thou,' quoth I, 'ac-
cursed,

For making me, so young, so old a widow!
And, when thou wed'st, let sorrow haunt thy
bed;

And be thy wife—if any be so mad—
As miserable by the life of thee
As thou hast made me by my dear lord's
death!

Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,
Even in so short a space, my woman's heart
Grossly grew captive to his honey words 80
And proved the subject of my own soul's
curse,

Which ever since hath kept my eyes from rest;
For never yet one hour in his bed
Have I enjoy'd the golden dew of sleep,
But have been waked by his timorous dreams.
Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick;
And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.

Q. Eliz. Poor heart, adieu! I pity thy
complaining.

Anne. No more than from my soul I
mourn for yours.

Q. Eliz. Farewell, thou woful welcomer
of glory! 90

Anne. Adieu, poor soul, that takest thy
leave of it!

Duch. [*To Dorset*] Go thou to Rich-
mond, and good fortune guide thee!

[*To Anne*] Go thou to Richard, and good
angels guard thee!

[*To Queen Eliz.*] Go thou to sanctuary, and
good thoughts possess thee!

I to my grave, where peace and rest lie with
me!

Eighty odd years of sorrow have I seen,
And each hour's joy wreck'd with a week of
teen.

Q. Eliz. Stay, yet look back with me unto
the Tower.

Pity, you ancient stones, these tender babes
Whom envy hath immured within your walls!
Rough cradle for such little pretty ones! 101
Rude ragged nurse, old sullen playfellow
For tender princes, use my babies well!
So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. London. The palace.

Sennet. Enter RICHARD, in pomp, crowned;
BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, a Page, and
others.

K. Rich. Stand all apart. Cousin of
Buckingham!

Buck. My gracious sovereign?

K. Rich. Give me thy hand. [*Here he
ascendeth his throne.*] Thus high, by thy
advice

And thy assistance, is King Richard seated;
But shall we wear these honours for a day?
Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?

Buck. Still live they and for ever may
they last!

K. Rich. O Buckingham, now do I play
the touch,

To try if thou be current gold indeed:
Young Edward lives: think now what I would
say. 10

Buck. Say on, my loving lord.

K. Rich. Why, Buckingham, I say, I
would be king.

Buck. Why, so you are, my thrice re-
nowned liege.

K. Rich. Ha! am I king? 'tis so: but
Edward lives.

Buck. True, noble prince.

K. Rich. O bitter consequence.
That Edward still should live! 'True, noble
prince!'

Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull:
Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead;
And I would have it suddenly perform'd.

What sayest thou? speak suddenly; be brief,
Buck. Your grace may do your pleasure.

K. Rich. Tut, tut, thou art all ice, thy
kindness freezeth:

Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

Buck. Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord,
Before I positively speak herein:
I will resolve your grace immediately. *[Exit. Cate. [Aside to stander by] The king is angry: see, he bites the lip.*
K. Rich. I will converse with iron-witted fools
And unrespective boys: none are for me
That look into me with considerate eyes: 30
High-reading Buckingham grows circumspect.
Boy!
Page. My lord?
K. Rich. Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold
Would tempt unto a close exploit of death?
Page. My lord, I know a discontented gentleman,
Whose humble means match not his haughty mind:
Gold were as good as twenty orators,
And will, no doubt, tempt him to any thing.
K. Rich. What is his name?
Page. His name, my lord, is Tyrrel.
K. Rich. I partly know the man: go, call him hither. *[Exit Page.]*
The deep-revolving witty Buckingham
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsel:
Hath he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath?

Enter STANLEY.

How now! what news with you?
Stan. My lord, I hear the Marquis Dorset's fled
To Richmond, in those parts beyond the sea
Where he abides. *[Stands apart.]*
K. Rich. Catesby!
Cate. My lord? 50
K. Rich. Rumour it abroad
That Anne, my wife, is sick and like to die:
I will take order for her keeping close.
Inquire me out some mean-born gentleman,
Whom I will marry straight to Clarence's daughter:
The boy is foolish, and I fear not him.
Look, how thou dream'st! I say again, give out
That Anne my wife is sick and like to die:
About it; for it stands me much upon, 59
To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me. *[Exit Catesby.]*
I must be married to my brother's daughter,
Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.
Murder her brothers, and then marry her!
Uncertain way of gain! But I am in
So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin:
Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.

Re-enter Page, with TYRREL.

Is thy name Tyrrel?
Tyr. James Tyrrel, and your most obedient subject.
K. Rich. Art thou, indeed?
Tyr. Prove me, my gracious sovereign.
K. Rich. Darest thou resolve to kill a friend of mine? 70
Tyr. Ay, my lord;
But I had rather kill two enemies.
K. Rich. Why, there thou hast it: two deep enemies,
Foes to my rest and my sweet sleep's disturbers
Are they that I would have thee deal upon:
Tyrrel, I mean those bastards in the Tower.
Tyr. Let me have open means to come to them,
And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.
K. Rich. Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrel:
Go, by this token: rise, and lend thine ear: 80
[Whispers.]
There is no more but so: say it is done,
And I will love thee, and prefer thee too.
Tyr. 'Tis done, my gracious lord.
K. Rich. Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrel, ere we sleep?
Tyr. Ye shall, my lord. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter BUCKINGHAM.

Buck. My lord, I have consider'd in my mind
The late demand that you did sound me in.
K. Rich. Well, let that pass. Dorset is fled to Richmond.
Buck. I hear that news, my lord.
K. Rich. Stanley, he is your wife's son: well, look to it. 90
Buck. My lord, I claim your gift, my due by promise,
For which your honour and your faith is pawn'd;
The earldom of Hereford and the moveables
The which you promised I should possess.
K. Rich. Stanley, look to your wife: if she convey
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.
Buck. What says your highness to my just demand?
K. Rich. As I remember, Henry the Sixth
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,
When Richmond was a little peevish boy. 100
A king, perhaps, perhaps,—
Buck. My lord!
K. Rich. How chance the prophet could not at that time

Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

Buck. My lord, your promise for the earldom,—

K. Rich. Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,

The mayor in courtesy show'd me the castle,
And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,

Because a bard of Ireland told me once,
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

Buck. My lord! 111

K. Rich. Ay, what's o'clock?

Buck. I am thus bold to put your grace in mind

Of what you promised me.

K. Rich. Well, but what's o'clock?

Buck. Upon the stroke of ten.

K. Rich. Well, let it strike.

Buck. Why let it strike?

K. Rich. Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke

Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.

I am not in the giving vein to-day.

Buck. Why, then resolve me whether you will or no. 120

K. Rich. Tut, tut,

Thou troublest me; I am not in the vein.

[*Exeunt all but Buckingham.*]

Buck. Is it even so? rewards he my true service

With such deep contempt? made I him king for this?

O, let me think on Hastings and be gone

To Brecknock, while my fearful head is on!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *The same.*

Enter TYRREL.

Tyr. The tyrannous and bloody deed is done,

The most arch act of piteous massacre

That ever yet this land was guilty of.

Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn

To do this ruthless piece of butchery,

Although they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,

Melting with tenderness and kind compassion
Wept like two children in their deaths' sad stories.

'Lo, thus,' quoth Dighton, 'lay those tender babes:'

'Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, 'girdling one another 10

Within their innocent alabaster arms:

Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,

Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.

A book of prayers on their pillow lay;

Which once,' quoth Forrest, 'almost changed my mind;

But O! the devil!—there the villain stopp'd;

Whilst Dighton thus told on: 'We smothered

The most replenished sweet work of nature,

That from the prime creation e'er she framed.'

Thus both are gone with conscience and remorse; 20

They could not speak; and so I left them both,

To bring this tidings to the bloody king.

And here he comes.

Enter KING RICHARD.

All hail, my sovereign liege!

K. Rich. Kind Tyrrel, am I happy in thy news?

Tyr. If to have done the thing you gave in charge

Beget your happiness, be happy then,

For it is done, my lord.

K. Rich. But didst thou see them dead?

Tyr. I did, my lord.

K. Rich. And buried, gentle Tyrrel?

Tyr. The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;

But how or in what place I do not know. 30

K. Rich. Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at after supper,

And thou shalt tell the process of their death.

Meantime, but think how I may do thee good,

And be inheritor of thy desire.

Farewell till soon. [*Exit Tyrrel.*]

The son of Clarence have I pent up close;

His daughter meanly have I match'd in marriage;

The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,

And Anne my wife hath bid the world good night.

Now, for I know the Breton Richmond aims

At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter, 41

And, by that knot, looks proudly o'er the crown,

To her I go, a jolly thriving wooer.

Enter CATESBY.

Cate. My lord.

K. Rich. Good news or bad, that thou comest in so bluntly?

Cate. Bad news, my lord: Ely is fled to Richmond;

And Buckingham, back'd with the hardy Welshmen,

Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

K. Rich. Ely with Richmond troubles me more near

Than Buckingham and his rash-levied army.
Come, I have heard that fearful commenting

Is leaden servitor to dull delay;
Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary:

Then fiery expedition be my wing,
Jove's Mercury, and herald for a king!
Come, muster men: my counsel is my shield;
We must be brief when traitors brave the field. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *Before the palace.*

Enter QUEEN MARGARET.

Q. Mar. So, now prosperity begins to mellow
And drop into the rotten mouth of death.
Here in these confines sily have I lurk'd,
To watch the waning of mine adversaries.
A dire induction am I witness to,
And will to France, hoping the consequence
Will prove as bitter, black, and tragical.
Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret: who
comes here?

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and the DUCHESS OF YORK.

Q. Eliz. Ah, my young princes! ah, my
tender babes!
My unblown flowers, new-appearing sweets!
If yet your gentle souls fly in the air 11
And be not fix'd in doom perpetual,
Hover about me with your airy wings
And hear your mother's lamentation!

Q. Mar. Hover about her; say, that right
for right
Hath dimm'd your infant morn to aged night.

Duch. So many miseries have crazed my
voice,
That my woe-wearied tongue is mute and
dumb,

Edward Plantagenet, why art thou dead?

Q. Mar. Plantagenet doth quit Plantagenet.
Edward for Edward pays a dying debt. 21

Q. Eliz. Wilt thou, O God, fly from such
gentle lambs,
And throw them in the entrails of the wolf?
When didst thou sleep when such a deed was
done?

Q. Mar. When holy Harry died, and my
sweet son.

Duch. Blind sight, dead life, poor mortal
living ghost,

Woe's scene, world's shame, grave's due by
life usurp'd,

Brief abstract and record of tedious days,
Rest thy unrest on England's lawful earth,

[*Sitting down.*]
Unlawfully made drunk with innocents' blood!

Q. Eliz. O, that thou wouldst as well af-
ford a grave 31

As thou canst yield a melancholy seat!

Then would I hide my bones, not rest them
here.

O, who hath any cause to mourn but I?
[*Sitting down by her.*]

Q. Mar. If ancient sorrow be most re-
verend,

Give mine the benefit of seniory,
And let my woes frown on the upper hand.

If sorrow can admit society,
[*Sitting down with them.*]

Tell o'er your woes again by viewing mine:
I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;
I had a Harry, till a Richard kill'd him: 41
Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard kill'd
him;

Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard kill'd him.
Duch. I had a Richard too, and thou didst
kill him;

I had a Rutland too, thou holp'st to kill him.

Q. Mar. Thou hadst a Clarence too, and
Richard kill'd him.

From forth the kennel of thy womb hath crept
A hell-hound that doth hunt us all to death:

That dog, that had his teeth before his eyes,

To worry lambs and lap their gentle blood, 50

That foul defacer of God's handiwork,

That excellent grand tyrant of the earth,

That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls,

Thy womb let loose, to chase us to our graves.

O upright, just, and true-disposing God,

How do I thank thee, that this carnal cur

Preys on the issue of his mother's body,

And makes her pew-fellow with others' moan!

Duch. O Harry's wife, triumph not in my
woes!

God witness with me, I have wept for thine. 60

Q. Mar. Bear with me; I am hungry for
revenge,

And now I cloy me with beholding it.

Thy Edward he is dead, that stabb'd my
Edward;

Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;

Young York he is but boot, because both they

Match not the high perfection of my loss:

Thy Clarence he is dead that kill'd my Edward;

And the beholders of this tragic play,

The adulterate Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan,
Grey,

Untimely smother'd in their dusky graves. 70

Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer,

Only reserved their factor, to buy souls

And send them thither: but at hand, at hand,

Ensues his piteous and unpitied end:

Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints pray,

To have him suddenly convey'd away.

Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I pray,

That I may live to say, The dog is dead!

Q. Eliz. O, thou didst prophesy the time
would come

That I should wish for thee to help me curse
That bottled spider, that foul bunch-back'd
toad! 81

Q. Mar. I call'd thee then vain flourish of
my fortune;

I call'd thee then poor shadow, painted queen;
The presentation of but what I was;
The flattering index of a direful pageant;
One heaved a-high, to be hurl'd down below;
A mother only mock'd with two sweet babes;
A dream of what thou wert, a breath, a bubble,
A sign of dignity, a garish flag,
To be the aim of every dangerous shot; 90
A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.

Where is thy husband now? where be thy
brothers?

Where are thy children? wherein dost thou joy?
Who sues to thee and cries 'God save the
queen'?

Where be the bending peers that flatter thee?
Where be the thronging troops that follow'd
thee?

Decline all this, and see what now thou art:
For happy wife, a most distressed widow;
For joyful mother, one that wails the name;
For queen, a very caitiff crown'd with care;
For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;
For one that scorn'd at me, now scorn'd of me;
For one being fear'd of all, now fearing one;
For one commanding all, obey'd of none.
Thus hath the course of justice wheel'd about,
And left thee but a very prey to time;
Having no more but thought of what thou wert,
To torture thee the more, being what thou art.
Thou didst usurp my place, and dost thou not
Usurp the just proportion of my sorrow? 110
Now thy proud neck bears half my burthen'd
yoke;

From which even here I slip my weary neck,
And leave the burthen of it all on thee.
Farewell. York's wife, and queen of sad mis-
chance:

These English woes will make me smile in
France.

Q. Eliz. O thou well skill'd in curses, stay
awhile,

And teach me how to curse mine enemies!

Q. Mar. Forbear to sleep the nights, and
fast the days;

Compare dead happiness with living woe;
Think that thy babes were fairer than they
were, 120

And he that slew them fouler than he is:
Bettering thy loss makes the bad causer worse:
Revolving this will teach thee how to curse.

Q. Eliz. My words are dull; O, quicken
them with thine!

Q. Mar. Thy woes will make them sharp,
and pierce like mine. [Exit.]

Duch. Why should calamity be full of words?

Q. Eliz. Windy attorneys to their client
woes,

Airy succeders of intestate joys,
Poor breathing orators of miseries!
Let them have scope: though what they do
impart 130

Help not at all, yet do they ease the heart.

Duch. If so, then be not tongue-tied: go
with me,

And in the breath of bitter words let's smother
My damned son, which thy two sweet sons
smother'd.

I hear his drum: be copious in exclams.

*Enter KING RICHARD, marching, with drums
and trumpets.*

K. Rich. Who intercepts my expedition?

Duch. O, she that might have intercepted
thee,

By strangling thee in her accursed womb,
From all the slaughters, wretch, that thou hast
done!

Q. Eliz. Hidest thou that forehead with a
golden crown, 140

Where should be graven, if that right were
right,
The slaughter of the prince that owed that
crown,
And the dire death of my two sons and bro-
thers?

Tell me, thou villain slave, where are my chil-
dren?

Duch. Thou toad, thou toad, where is thy
brother Clarence?

And little Ned Plantagenet, his son?

Q. Eliz. Where is kind Hastings, Rivers,
Vaughan, Grey?

K. Rich. A flourish, trumpets! strike
alarum, drums!

Let not the heavens hear these tell-tale women
Rail on the Lord's anointed: strike, I say! 150
[Flourish. Alarums.]

Either be patient, and entreat me fair,

Or with the clamorous report of war

Thus will I drown your exclamations.

Duch. Art thou my son?

K. Rich. Ay, I thank God, my father, and
yourself.

Duch. Then patiently hear my impatience.

K. Rich. Madam, I have a touch of your
condition,

Which cannot brook the accent of reproof.

Duch. O, let me speak!

K. Rich. Do then; but I'll not hear.

Duch. I will be mild and gentle in my
speech. 160

K. Rich. And brief, good mother; for I
am in haste.

Duch. Art thou so hasty? I have stay'd for thee,
 God knows, in anguish, pain and agony.
K. Rich. And came I not at last to comfort you?
Duch. No, by the holy rood, thou know'st it well,
 Thou camest on earth to make the earth my hell.
 A grievous burthen was thy birth to me;
 Tetchy and wayward thy infancy;
 Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious,
 Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous, 170
 Thy age confirm'd, proud, subtle, bloody, treacherous,
 More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred:
 What comfortable hour canst thou name,
 That ever graced me in thy company?
K. Rich. Faith, none, but Humphrey Hour, that call'd your grace
 To breakfast once forth of my company.
 If I be so disgracious in your sight,
 Let me march on, and not offend your grace.
 Strike up the drum.
Duch. I prithee, hear me speak.
K. Rich. You speak too bitterly.
Duch. Hear me a word; 180
 For I shall never speak to thee again.
K. Rich. So.
Duch. Either thou wilt die, by God's just ordinance,
 Ere from this war thou turn a conqueror,
 Or I with grief and extreme age shall perish
 And never look upon thy face again.
 Therefore take with thee my most heavy curse;
 Which, in the day of battle, tire thee more
 Than all the complete armour that thou wear'st!
 My prayers on the adverse party fight; 190
 And there the little souls of Edward's children
 Whisper the spirits of thine enemies
 And promise them success and victory.
 Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end;
 Shame serves thy life and doth thy death attend. [Exit.
Q. Eliz. Though far more cause, yet much less spirit to curse
 Abides in me; I say amen to all.
K. Rich. Stay, madam; I must speak a word with you.
Q. Eliz. I have no more sons of the royal blood
 For thee to murder: for my daughters, Richard,
 They shall be praying nuns, not weeping queens; 201
 And therefore level not to hit their lives.

K. Rich. You have a daughter call'd Elizabeth,
 Virtuous and fair, royal and gracious.
Q. Eliz. And must she die for this! O, let her live,
 And I'll corrupt her manners, stain her beauty;
 Slander myself as false to Edward's bed;
 Throw over her the veil of infamy:
 So she may live unscarr'd of bleeding slaughter,
 I will confess she was not Edward's daughter.
K. Rich. Wrong not her birth, she is of royal blood. 211
Q. Eliz. To save her life, I'll say she is not so.
K. Rich. Her life is only safest in her birth.
Q. Eliz. And only in that safety died her brothers.
K. Rich. Lo, at their births good stars were opposite.
Q. Eliz. No, to their lives bad friends were contrary.
K. Rich. All unavoided is the doom of destiny.
Q. Eliz. True, when avoided grace makes destiny:
 My babes were destined to a fairer death,
 If grace had bless'd thee with a fairer life. 220
K. Rich. You speak as if that I had slain my cousins.
Q. Eliz. Cousins, indeed; and by their uncle cozen'd
 Of comfort, kingdom, kindred, freedom, life.
 Whose hand soever lanced their tender hearts,
 Thy head, all indirectly, gave direction:
 No doubt the murderous knife was dull and blunt
 Till it was whetted on thy stone-hard heart,
 To revel in the entrails of my lambs.
 But that still use of grief makes wild grief tame,
 My tongue should to thy ears not name my boys 230
 Till that my nails were anchor'd in thine eyes;
 And I, in such a desperate bay of death,
 Like a poor bark, of sails and tackling reft,
 Rush all to pieces on thy rocky bosom.
K. Rich. Madam, so thrive I in my enterprise
 And dangerous success of bloody wars,
 As I intend more good to you and yours
 Than ever you or yours were by me wrong'd!
Q. Eliz. What good is cover'd with the face of heaven,
 To be discover'd, that can do me good? 240
K. Rich. The advancement of your children, gentle lady.
Q. Eliz. Up to some scaffold, there to lose their heads?

K. Rich. No, to the dignity and height of honour,
The high imperial type of this earth's glory.
Q. Eliz. Flatter my sorrows with report of it;
Tell me what state, what dignity, what honour,
Canst thou demise to any child of mine?
K. Rich. Even all I have; yea, and myself and all,
Will I withal endow a child of thine;
So in the Lethe of thy angry soul 250
Thou drown the sad remembrance of those wrongs
Which thou supposest I have done to thee.
Q. Eliz. Be brief, lest that the process of thy kindness
Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.
K. Rich. Then know, that from my soul I love thy daughter.
Q. Eliz. My daughter's mother thinks it with her soul.
K. Rich. What do you think?
Q. Eliz. That thou dost love my daughter from thy soul:
So from thy soul's love didst thou love her brothers;
K. Rich. Be not so hasty to confound my meaning: 261
I mean, that with my soul I love thy daughter,
And mean to make her queen of England.
Q. Eliz. Say then, who dost thou mean shall be her king?
K. Rich. Even he that makes her queen: who should be else?
Q. Eliz. What, thou?
K. Rich. I, even I: what think you of it, madam?
Q. Eliz. How canst thou woo her?
K. Rich. That would I learn of you,
As one that are best acquainted with her humour.
Q. Eliz. And wilt thou learn of me?
K. Rich. Madam, with all my heart. 270
Q. Eliz. Send to her, by the man that slew her brothers,
A pair of bleeding hearts; thereon engrave
Edward and York; then haply she will weep:
Therefore present to her,—as sometime Margaret
Did to thy father, steep'd in Rutland's blood,—
A handkerchief; which, say to her, did drain
The purple sap from her sweet brother's body.
And bid her dry her weeping eyes therewith.
If this inducement force her not to love,
Send her a story of thy noble acts: 280
Tell her thou madest away her uncle Clarence,
Her uncle Rivers; yea, and, for her sake,

Madest quick conveyance with her good aunt Anne.

K. Rich. Come, come, you mock me; this is not the way

To win your daughter.

Q. Eliz. There is no other way;
Unless thou couldst put on some other shape,
And not be Richard that hath done all this.

K. Rich. Say that I did all this for love of her.

Q. Eliz. Nay, then indeed she cannot choose but hate thee.

Having bought love with such a bloody spoil.

K. Rich. Look, what is done cannot be now amended: 291

Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes,
Which after hours give leisure to repent.
If I did take the kingdom from your sons,
To make amends, I'll give it to your daughter.
If I have kill'd the issue of your womb,
To quicken your increase, I will beget
Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter:
A grandam's name is little less in love
Than is the doting title of a mother; 300
They are as children but one step below,
Even of your mettle, of your very blood;
Of all one pain, save for a night of groans
Endured of her; for whom you bid like sorrow.

Your children were vexation to your youth,
But mine shall be a comfort to your age.
The loss you have is but a son being king,
And by that loss your daughter is made queen.
I cannot make you what amends I would,
Therefore accept such kindness as I can. 310
Dorset your son, that with a fearful soul
Leads discontented steps in foreign soil,
This fair alliance quickly shall call home
To high promotions and great dignity:
The king, that calls your beauteous daughter wife,

Familiarly shall call thy Dorset brother;
Again shall you be mother to a king,
And all the ruins of distressful times
Repair'd with double riches of content.
What! we have many goodly days to see: 320
The liquid drops of tears that you have shed
Shall come again, transform'd to orient-pearl,
Advantaging their loan with interest
Of ten times double gain of happiness.
Go, then, my mother, to thy daughter go;
Make bold her bashful years with your experience;

Prepare her ears to hear a wooer's tale;
Put in her tender heart the aspiring flame
Of golden sovereignty; acquaint the princess
With the sweet silent hours of marriage joys:
And when this arm of mine hath chastised 331
The petty rebel, dull-brain'd Buckingham,

Bound with triumphant garlands will I come
And lead thy daughter to a conqueror's bed;
To whom I will retail my conquest won.
And she shall be sole victress, Cæsar's Cæsar.

Q. Eliz. What were I best to say? her
father's brother
Would be her lord? or shall I say, her uncle?
Or, he that slew her brothers and her uncles?
Under what title shall I woo for thee, 340
That God, the law, my honour and her love,
Can make seem pleasing to her tender years?

K. Rich. Infer fair England's peace by
this alliance.

Q. Eliz. Which she shall purchase with
still lasting war.

K. Rich. Say that the king, which may
command, entreats.

Q. Eliz. That at her hands which the
king's King forbids.

K. Rich. Say, she shall be a high and
mighty queen.

Q. Eliz. To wail the title, as her mother
doth.

K. Rich. Say, I will love her everlastingly.

Q. Eliz. But how long shall that title
'ever' last? 350

K. Rich. Sweetly in force unto her fair
life's end.

Q. Eliz. But how long fairly shall her
sweet life last?

K. Rich. So long as heaven and nature
lengthens it.

Q. Eliz. So long as hell and Richard likes
of it.

K. Rich. Say, I, her sovereign, am her
subject love.

Q. Eliz. But she, your subject, loathes
such sovereignty.

K. Rich. Be eloquent in my behalf to her.

Q. Eliz. An honest tale speeds best being
plainly told.

K. Rich. Then in plain terms tell her my
loving tale.

Q. Eliz. Plain and not honest is too harsh
a style. 360

K. Rich. Your reasons are too shallow and
too quick.

Q. Eliz. O no, my reasons are too deep
and dead:

Too deep and dead, poor infants, in their
grave.

K. Rich. Harp not on that string, madam;
that is past.

Q. Eliz. Harp on it still shall I till heart-
strings break.

K. Rich. Now, by my George, my garter,
and my crown.—

Q. Eliz. Profaned, dishonour'd, and the
third usurp'd.

K. Rich. I swear—

Q. Eliz. By nothing; for this is no oath:
The George, profaned, hath lost his holy honour;
The garter, blemish'd, pawn'd his knightly
virtue; 370

The crown, usurp'd, disgraced his kingly glory.
If something thou wilt swear to be believed,
Swear then by something that thou hast not
wrong'd.

K. Rich. Now, by the world—

Q. Eliz. 'Tis full of thy foul wrongs.

K. Rich. My father's death—

Q. Eliz. Thy life hath that dishonour'd.

K. Rich. Then, by myself—

Q. Eliz. Thyself thyself misuseth.

K. Rich. Why then, by God—

Q. Eliz. God's wrong is most of all.

If thou hadst fear'd to break an oath by Him,
The unity the king thy brother made

Had not broken, nor my brother slain: 380

If thou hadst fear'd to break an oath by Him,

The imperial metal, circling now thy brow,
Had graced the tender temples of my child,

And both the princes had been breathing here,
Which now, two tender playfellows for dust,

Thy broken faith hath made a prey for worms.
What canst thou swear by now?

K. Rich. The time to come.

Q. Eliz. That thou hast wronged in the
time o'erpast;

For I myself have many tears to wash
Hereafter time, for time past wrong'd by thee.

The children live, whose parents thou hast
slaughter'd, 391

Ungovern'd youth, to wail it in their age;
The parents live, whose children thou hast
butcher'd,

Old wither'd plants, to wail it with their age.
Swear not by time to come; for that thou hast

Misused ere used, by time misused o'erpast.

K. Rich. As I intend to prosper and repent,
So thrive I in my dangerous attempt

Of hostile arms! myself myself confound!

Heaven and fortune bar me happy hours! 400

Day, yield me not thy light; nor, night, thy
rest!

Be opposite all planets of good luck

To my proceedings, if, with pure heart's love,
Immaculate devotion, holy thoughts,

I tender not thy beauteous princely daughter!

In her consists my happiness and thine;

Without her, follows to this land and me,

To thee, herself, and many a Christian soul,

Death, desolation, ruin and decay:

It cannot be avoided but by this; 410

It will not be avoided but by this.

Therefore, good mother,—I must call you so—

Be the attorney of my love to her:

Plead what I will be, not what I have been;

Not my deserts, but what I will deserve:
Urge the necessity and state of times,
And be not peevish-fond in great designs.

Q. Eliz. Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?

K. Rich. Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

Q. Eliz. Shall I forget myself to be myself?

K. Rich. Ay, if yourself's remembrance wrong yourself. 421

Q. Eliz. But thou didst kill my children.

K. Rich. But in your daughter's womb I bury them:

Where in that nest of spicery they shall breed
Selves of themselves, to your recomforture.

Q. Eliz. Shall I go win my daughter to thy will?

K. Rich. And be a happy mother by the deed.

Q. Eliz. I go. Write to me very shortly,
And you shall understand from me her mind.

K. Rich. Bear her my true love's kiss; and
so, farewell. [*Exit Queen Elizabeth.* 430
Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman!

Enter RATCLIFF; CATESBY following.

How now! what news?

Rat. My gracious sovereign, on the western coast

Rideth a puissant navy; to the shore
Throng many doubtful hollow-hearted friends,
Unarm'd, and unresolved to beat them back:
Tis thought that Richmond is their admiral;
And there they hull, expecting but the aid
Of Buckingham to welcome them ashore.

K. Rich. Some light-foot friend post to the
Duke of Norfolk: 440

Ratcliff, thyself, or Catesby; where is he?

Cate. Here, my lord.

K. Rich. Fly to the duke: [*To Ratcliff*]

Post thou to Salisbury:

When thou comest thither,—[*To Catesby*]

Dull, unmindful villain,

Why stand'st thou still, and go'st not to the
duke?

Cate. First, mighty sovereign, let me know
your mind,

What from your grace I shall deliver to him.

K. Rich. O, true, good Catesby: bid him
levy straight

The greatest strength and power he can make,
And meet me presently at Salisbury. 450

Cate. I go. [*Exit.*

Rat. What is 't your highness' pleasure I
shall do

At Salisbury?

K. Rich. Why, what wouldst thou do there
before I go?

Rat. Your highness told me I should post
before.

K. Rich. My mind is changed, sir, my
mind is changed.

Enter LORD STANLEY.

How now, what news with you?

Stan. None, good my lord, to please you
with the hearing;

Nor none so bad, but it may well be told.

K. Rich. Hoyday, a riddle! neither good
nor bad! 460

Why dost thou run so many mile about,
When thou mayst tell thy tale a nearer way?
Once more, what news?

Stan. Richmond is on the seas.

K. Rich. There let him sink, and be the
seas on him!

White-liver'd runagate, what doth he there?

Stan. I know not, mighty sovereign, but by
guess.

K. Rich. Well, sir, as you guess, as you
guess?

Stan. Stirr'd up by Dorset, Buckingham,
and Ely,

He makes for England, there to claim the crown.

K. Rich. Is the chair empty? is the sword
unsway'd? 470

Is the king dead? the empire unpossess'd?

What heir of York is there alive but we?

And who is England's king but great York's
heir?

Then, tell me, what doth he upon the sea?

Stan. Unless for that, my liege, I cannot
guess.

K. Rich. Unless for that he comes to be
your liege,

You cannot guess wherefore the Welshman
comes.

Thou wilt revolt, and fly to him, I fear.

Stan. No, mighty liege; therefore mistrust
me not.

K. Rich. Where is thy power, then, to beat
him back? 480

Where are thy tenants and thy followers?

Are they not now upon the western shore,

Safe-conducting the rebels from their ships?

Stan. No, my good lord, my friends are in
the north.

K. Rich. Cold friends to Richard: what
do they in the north,

When they should serve their sovereign in
the west?

Stan. They have not been commanded,
mighty sovereign:

Please it your majesty to give me leave,

I'll muster up my friends, and meet your grace
Where and what time your majesty shall please.

K. Rich. Ay, ay, thou wouldst be gone to
join with Richmond: 491

I will not trust you, sir.

Stan. Most mighty sovereign,
You have no cause to hold my friendship
doubtful:

I never was nor never will be false.

K. Rich. Well,
Go muster men; but, hear you, leave behind
Your son, George Stanley: look your faith be
firm,
Or else his head's assurance is but frail.

Stan. So deal with him as I prove true to
you. [Exit.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My gracious sovereign, now in
Devonshire, 500
As I by friends am well advertised,
Sir Edward Courtney, and the haughty prelate
Bishop of Exeter, his brother there,
With many more confederates, are in arms.

Enter another Messenger.

Sec. Mess. My liege, in Kent the Guild-
fords are in arms;
And every hour more competitors
Flock to their aid, and still their power in-
creaseth.

Enter another Messenger.

Third Mess. My lord, the army of the
Duke of Buckingham—

K. Rich. Out on you, owls! nothing but
songs of death? [He striketh him.
Take that, until thou bring me better news.

Third Mess. The news I have to tell your
majesty
Is, that by sudden floods and fall of waters,
Buckingham's army is dispersed and scatter'd;
And he himself wander'd away alone,
No man knows whither.

K. Rich. I cry thee mercy:
There is my purse to cure that blow of thine.
Hath any well-advised friend proclaim'd
Reward to him that brings the traitor in?

Third Mess. Such proclamation hath been
made, my liege.

Enter another Messenger.

Fourth Mess. Sir Thomas Lovel and Lord
Marquis Dorset, 520

'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms.
Yet this good comfort bring I to your grace,
The Breton navy is dispersed by tempest:
Richmond, in Dorsetshire, sent out a boat
Unto the shore, to ask those on the banks
If they were his assistants, yea or no:
Who answer'd him, they came from Bucking-
ham

Upon his party: he, mistrusting them,
Hoised sail and made away for Brittany.

K. Rich. March on, march on, since we
are up in arms; 530

If not to fight with foreign enemies,
Yet to beat down these rebels here at home.

Re-enter CATESBY.

Cate. My liege, the Duke of Buckingham
is taken;
That is the best news: that the Earl of
Richmond
Is with a mighty power landed at Milford,
Is colder tidings, yet they must be told.

K. Rich. Away toward Salisbury! while
we reason here,
A royal battle might be won and lost:
Some one take order Buckingham be brought
To Salisbury; the rest march on with me. 540
[Flourish. Exeunt

SCENE V. *Lord Derby's house.*

*Enter DERBY and SIR CHRISTOPHER
URSWICK.*

Der. Sir Christopher, tell Richmond this
from me:
That in the sty of this most bloody boar
My son George Stanley is frank'd up in hold:
If I revolt, off goes young George's head;
The fear of that withholds my present aid.
But, tell me, where is princely Richmond now?

Chris. At Pembroke, or at Ha'rford-west,
in Wales.

Der. What men of name resort to him?

Chris. Sir Walter Herbert, a renowned
soldier;
Sir Gilbert Talbot, Sir William Stanley;
Oxford, redoubted Pembroke, Sir James Blunt,
And Rice ap Thomas, with a valiant crew;
And many more of noble fame and worth:
And towards London they do bend their
course,

If by the way they be not fought withal.

Der. Return unto thy lord; commend me
to him:

Tell him the queen hath heartily consented
He shall espouse Elizabeth her daughter.
These letters will resolve him of my mind.
Farewell. [Exeunt. 20

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Salisbury. An open place.*

*Enter the Sheriff, and BUCKINGHAM, with
halberds, led to execution.*

Buck. Will not King Richard let me speak
with him?

Sher. No, my good lord; therefore be patient.

Buck. Hastings, and Edward's children,
Rivers, Grey,

Holy King Henry, and thy fair son Edward,
Vaughan, and all that have miscarried
By underhand corrupted foul injustice,

If that your moody discontented souls
Do through the clouds behold this present hour,
Even for revenge mock my destruction!
This is All-Souls' day, fellows, is it not? 10

Sher. It is, my lord.

Buck. Why, then All-Souls' day is my
body's doomsday.

This is the day that, in King Edward's time,
I wish'd might fall on me, when I was found
False to his children or his wife's allies;
This is the day wherein I wish'd to fall
By the false faith of him I trusted most;
This, this All-Souls' day to my fearful soul
Is the determined respite of my wrongs:
That high All-Seer that I dallied with 20
Hath turn'd my feigned prayer on my head
And given in earnest what I begg'd in jest.
Thus doth he force the swords of wicked men
To turn their own points on their masters'
bosoms:

Now Margaret's curse is fallen upon my head;
'When he,' quoth she, 'shall split thy heart
with sorrow,

Remember Margaret was a prophetess.
Come, sirs, convey me to the block of shame;
Wrong hath but wrong, and blame the due of
blame. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *The camp near Tamworth.*

Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, HERBERT,
and others, with drum and colours.

Richm. Fellows in arms, and my most
loving friends,
Bruised underneath the yoke of tyranny,
Thus far into the bowels of the land
Have we march'd on without impediment;
And here receive we from our father Stanley
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.
The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,
That spoil'd your summer fields and fruitful
vines,

Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes
his trough

In your embowell'd bosoms, this foul swine 10
Lies now even in the centre of this isle,
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn:
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march.
In God's name, cheerly on, courageous friends,
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace
By this one bloody trial of sharp war.

Oxf. Every man's conscience is a thousand
swords,

To fight against that bloody homicide.

Herb. I doubt not but his friends will fly
to us.

Blunt. He hath no friends but who are
friends for fear, 20
Which in his greatest need will shrink from
him.

Richm. All for our vantage. Then, in
God's name, march:
True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's
wings;
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures
kings. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *Bosworth Field.*

Enter KING RICHARD in arms, with NORFOLK,
the EARL OF SURREY, and others.

K. Rich. Here pitch our tents, even here in
Bosworth field.

My Lord of Surrey, why look you so sad?

Sur. My heart is ten times lighter than
my looks.

K. Rich. My Lord of Norfolk,—

Nor. Here, most gracious liege.

K. Rich. Norfolk, we must have knocks;
ha! must we not?

Nor. We must both give and take, my
gracious lord.

K. Rich. Up with my tent there! here will
I lie to-night;

But where to-morrow? Well, all 's one for that.
Who hath described the number of the foe?

Nor. Six or seven thousand is their ut-
most power. 10

K. Rich. Why, our battalion trebles that
account:

Besides, the king's name is a tower of strength,
Which they upon the adverse party want.

Up with my tent there! Valiant gentlemen,

Let us survey the vantage of the field;

Call for some men of sound direction:

Let's want no discipline, make no delay;

For, lords, to-morrow is a busy day. [Exeunt.]

Enter, on the other side of the field, RICHMOND,
SIR WILLIAM BRANDON, OXFORD, and others.
Some of the Soldiers pitch Richmond's tent.

Richm. The weary sun hath made a golden
set,

And, by the bright track of his fiery car, 20
Gives signal of a goodly day to-morrow.

Sir William Brandon, you shall bear my
standard.

Give me some ink and paper in my tent:

I'll draw the form and model of our battle,

Limit each leader to his several charge,

And part in just proportion our small strength.

My Lord of Oxford, you, Sir William Brandon,

And you, Sir Walter Herbert, stay with me.

The Earl of Pembroke keeps his regiment:

Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to him,

And by the second hour in the morning 31
Desire the earl to see me in my tent:

Yet one thing more, good Blunt, before how
go'st,

Where is Lord Stanley quarter'd, dost thou know?

Blunt. Unless I have mista'en his colours much,

Which well I am assured I have not done,
His regiment lies half a mile at least
South from the mighty power of the king.

Richm. If without peril it be possible, 39
Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to him,
And give him from me this most needful scroll.

Blunt. Upon my life, my lord, I'll undertake it;

And so, God give you quiet rest to-night!

Richm. Good night, good Captain Blunt.

Come, gentlemen,

Let us consult upon to-morrow's business:

In to our tent; the air is raw and cold.

[*They withdraw into the tent.*]

Enter, to his tent, KING RICHARD, NORFOLK, RATCLIFF, CATESBY, and others.

K. Rich. What is't o'clock?

Cate. It's supper-time, my lord;
It's nine o'clock.

K. Rich. I will not sup to-night.
Give me some ink and paper.

What, is my beaver easier than it was? 50
And all my armour laid into my tent?

Cate. It is, my liege; and all things are in readiness.

K. Rich. Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;

Use careful watch, choose trusty sentinels.

Nor. I go, my lord.

K. Rich. Stir with the lark to-morrow,
gentle Norfolk.

Nor. I warrant you, my lord. [*Exit.*]

K. Rich. Catesby!

Cate. My lord?

K. Rich. Send out a pursuivant at arms
To Stanley's regiment; bid him bring his power

Before sunrising, lest his son George fall 61
Into the blind cave of eternal night.

[*Exit Catesby.*]

Fill me a bowl of wine. Give me a watch.
Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow.
Look that my staves be sound, and not too heavy.

Ratcliff!

Rat. My lord!?

K. Rich. Saw'st thou the melancholy Lord
Northumberland?

Rat. Thomas the Earl of Surrey, and himself, 69

Much about cock-shut time, from troop to troop
Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.

K. Rich. So, I am satisfied. Give me a bowl of wine:

I have not that alacrity of spirit,
Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.
Set it down. Is ink and paper ready?

Rat. It is, my lord.

K. Rich. Bid my guard watch; leave me.
Ratcliff, about the mid of night come to my tent

And help to arm me. Leave me, I say.

[*Exeunt Ratcliff and the other Attendants.*]

Enter DERBY to RICHMOND in his tent, Lords and others attending.

Der. Fortune and victory sit on thy helm!

Richm. All comfort that the dark night can afford. 80

Be to thy person, noble father-in-law!

Tell me, how fares our loving mother?

Der. I, by attorney, bless thee from thy mother,

Who prays continually for Richmond's good:
So much for that. The silent hours steal on,
And flaky darkness breaks within the east.

In brief,—for so the season bids us be,—

Prepare thy battle early in the morning,

And put thy fortune to the arbitrement

Of bloody strokes and mortal-staring war. 90

I, as I may—that which I would I cannot,—

With best advantage will deceive the time,

And aid thee in this doubtful shock of arms:

But on thy side I may not be too forward,

Lest, being seen, thy brother, tender George,

Be executed in his father's sight.

Farewell: the leisure and the fearful time

Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love

And ample interchange of sweet discourse,

Which so long sunder'd friends should dwell upon: 100

God gives us leisure for these rites of love!

Once more, adieu: be valiant, and speed well!

Richm. Good lords, conduct him to his regiment:

I'll strive, with troubled thoughts, to take a nap,

Lest leaden slumber peise me down to-morrow,

When I should mount with wings of victory:

Once more, good night, kind lords and gentlemen. [*Exeunt all but Richmond.*]

O Thou, whose captain I account myself,

Look on my forces with a gracious eye; 109

Put in their hands thy bruising irons of wrath,

That they may crush down with a heavy fall

The usurping helmets of our adversaries!

Make us thy ministers of chastisement,

That we may praise thee in the victory!

To thee I do commend my watchful soul,

Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes:

Sleeping and waking, O, defend me still!

[*Sleeps.*]

Enter the Ghost of PRINCE EDWARD, son to HENRY the Sixth.

Ghost. [To Richard] Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!
Think, how thou stab'dst me in my prime of youth
At Tewksbury: despair, therefore, and die!
[To Richmond] Be cheerful, Richmond; for the wronged souls
Of butcher'd princes fight in thy behalf:
King Henry's issue, Richmond, comforts thee.

Enter the Ghost of HENRY the Sixth.

Ghost. [To Richard] When I was mortal,
my anointed body
By thee was punched full of deadly holes:
Think on the Tower and me: despair, and die!
Harry the Sixth bids thee despair and die!
[To Richmond] Virtuous and holy, be thou conqueror!
Harry, that prophesied thou shouldst be king,
The wronged guard by battle! live, and flourish!

Enter the Ghost of CLARENCE.

Ghost. [To Richard] Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!
I, that was wash'd to death with fulsome wine,
Poor Clarence, by thy guile betrayed to death!
To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword: despair, and die!—
[To Richmond] Thou offspring of the house of Lancaster,
The wronged heirs of York to pray for thee:
Good angels guard thy battle! live, and flourish!

Enter the Ghosts of RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN.

Ghost of R. [To Richard] Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow,
Rivers, that died at Pomfret! despair, and die!

Ghost of G. [To Richard] Think upon Grey, and let thy soul despair! 141

Ghost of V. [To Richard] Think upon Vaughan, and, with guilty fear,
Let fall thy lance: despair, and die!

All. [To Richmond] Awake and think our wrongs in Richard's bosom
Will conquer him! awake, and win the day!

Enter the Ghost of HASTINGS.

Ghost. [To Richard] Bloody and guilty,
guiltily awake,
And in a bloody battle end thy days!
Think on Lord Hastings: despair, and die!
[To Richmond] Quiet untroubled soul, awake,
awake!
Arm, fight, and conquer, for fair England's sake! 150

Enter the Ghosts of the two young Princes.

Ghosts. [To Richard] Dream on thy cousins smother'd in the Tower:

Let us be lead within thy bosom, Richard,
And weigh thee down to ruin, shame, and death!

Thy nephews' souls bid thee despair and die!
[To Richmond] Sleep, Richmond, sleep in peace, and wake in joy;

Good angels guard thee from the boar's annoy!
Live, and beget a happy race of kings!
Edward's unhappy sons do bid thee flourish.

Enter the Ghost of LADY ANNE.

Ghost. [To Richard] Richard, thy wife,
that wretched Anne thy wife,
That never slept a quiet hour with thee, 160
Now fills thy sleep with perturbations:
To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword: despair, and die!
[To Richmond] Thou quiet soul, sleep thou a quiet sleep;

Dream of success and happy victory!
Thy adversary's wife doth pray for thee.

Enter the Ghost of BUCKINGHAM.

Ghost. [To Richard] The first was I that help'd thee to the crown;
The last was I that felt thy tyranny:
O, in the battle think on Buckingham,
And die in terror of thy guiltiness! 170
Dream on, dream on, of bloody deeds and death:

Fainting, despair: despairing, yield thy breath!
[To Richmond] I died for hope ere I could lend thee aid:

But cheer thy heart, and be thou not dismay'd:
God and good angels fight on Richmond's side;
And Richard falls in height of all his pride.

[The Ghosts vanish. King Richard starts out of his dream.]

K. Rich. Give me another horse: bind up my wounds.

Have mercy, Jesu!—Soft! I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear? myself? there's none else by:
Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.
Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am.
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why:

Lest I revenge. What, myself upon myself?
Alack, I love myself. Wherefore? for any good

That I myself have done unto myself?
O, no! alas, I rather hate myself
For hateful deeds committed by myself! 190
I am a villain: yet I lie, I am not.

Fool, of thyself speak well: fool, do not flatter.
 My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
 And every tongue brings in a several tale,
 And every tale condemns me for a villain.
 Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree;
 Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree;
 All several sins, all used in each degree,
 Throng to the bar, crying all, Guilty! guilty!
 I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;
 And if I die, no soul shall pity me: 201
 Nay, wherefore should they, since that I my-
 self

Find in myself no pity to myself?
 Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd
 Came to my tent; and every one did threat
 To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

Enter RATCLIFF.

Rat. My lord!

K. Rich. 'Zounds! who is there?

Rat. Ratcliff, my lord; 'tis I. The early
 village-cock
 Hath twice done salutation to the morn; 210
 Your friends are up, and buckle on their
 armour.

K. Rich. O Ratcliff, I have dream'd a
 fearful dream!
 What thinkest thou, will our friends prove all
 true?

Rat. No doubt, my lord.

K. Rich. O Ratcliff, I fear, I fear,—

Rat. Nay, good my lord, be not afraid of
 shadows.

K. Rich. By the apostle Paul, shadows to-
 night
 Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard
 Than can the substance of ten thousand sol-
 diers

Armed in proof, and led by shallow Richmond.
 It is not yet near day. Come, go with me; 220
 Under our tents I'll play the eaves-dropper,
 To see if any mean to shrink from me. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter the Lords to RICHMOND, sitting in his
 tent.*

Lords. Good morrow, Richmond!

Richm. Cry mercy, lords and watchful
 gentlemen,

That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.

Lords. How have you slept, my lord?

Richm. The sweetest sleep, and fairest-
 boding dreams

That ever enter'd in a drowsy head,
 Have I since your departure had, my lords.
 Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard
 murder'd, 230

Came to my tent, and cried on victory:
 I promise you, my soul is very joyous
 In the remembrance of so fair a dream.
 How far into the morning is it, lords?

Lords. Upon the stroke of four.

Richm. Why, then 'tis time to arm and
 give direction.

His oration to his soldiers.

More than I have said, loving countrymen,
 The leisure and enforcement of the time
 Forbids to dwell upon: yet remember this,
 God and our good cause fight upon our side;
 The prayers of holy saints and wronged souls,
 Like high-rear'd bulwarks, stand before our
 faces;

Richard except, those whom we fight against
 Had rather have us win than him they follow:
 For what is he they follow? truly, gentlemen,
 A bloody tyrant and a homicide;
 One raised in blood, and one in blood estab-
 lish'd;

One that made means to come by what he
 hath,
 And slaughter'd those that were the means to
 help him;

A base foul stone, made precious by the foil
 Of England's chair, where he is falsely set;
 One that hath ever been God's enemy:
 Then, if you fight against God's enemy,
 God will in justice ward you as his soldiers;
 If you do sweat to put a tyrant down,
 You sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain;
 If you do fight against your country's foes,
 Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire;
 If you do fight in safeguard of your wives, 259
 Your wives shall welcome home the conquerors;
 If you do free your children from the sword,
 Your children's children quit it in your age.
 Then, in the name of God and all these rights,
 Advance your standards, draw your willing
 swords.

For me, the ransom of my bold attempt
 Shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold
 face;

But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt
 The least of you shall share his part thereof.
 Sound drums and trumpets boldly and cheer-
 fully;

God and Saint George! Richmond and victory!
 [*Exeunt.* 270]

*Re-enter KING RICHARD, RATCLIFF, Attend-
 ants and Forces.*

K. Rich. What said Northumberland as
 touching Richmond?

Rat. That he was never trained up in arms.

K. Rich. He said the truth: and what said
 Surrey then?

Rat. He smiled and said 'The better for
 our purpose

K. Rich. He was in the right: and so in-
 deed it is. [*Clock striketh.*]

Tell the clock there. Give me a calendar.
Who saw the sun to-day?

Rat. Not I, my lord.

K. Rich. Then he disdains to shine; for by
the book
He should have braved the east an hour ago:
A black day will it be to somebody. 280
Ratcliff!

Rat. My lord?

K. Rich. The sun will not be seen to-day;
The sky doth frown and lour upon our army.
I would these dewy tears were from the
ground.

Not shine to-day! Why, what is that to me
More than to Richmond? for the selfsame
heaven

That frowns on me looks sadly upon him.

Enter NORFOLK.

Nor. Arm, arm, my lord; the foe vaunts in
the field.

K. Rich. Come, bustle, bustle; caparison
my horse.

Call up Lord Stanley, bid him bring his power:
I will lead forth my soldiers to the plain, 291
And thus my battle shall be ordered:
My foreward shall be drawn out all in length,
Consisting equally of horse and foot;
Our archers shall be placed in the midst:
John Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Earl of Surrey,
Shall have the leading of this foot and horse.
They thus directed, we will follow
In the main battle, whose puissance on either
side

Shall be well winged with our chiefest horse.
This, and Saint George to boot! What
think'st thou, Norfolk? 301

Nor. A good direction, warlike sovereign.
This found I on my tent this morning.

[He sheweth him a paper.]

K. Rich. *[Reads]* 'Jockey of Norfolk, be
not too bold,
For Dickon thy master is bought and sold.'
A thing devised by the enemy.
Go, gentlemen, every man unto his charge:
Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls:
Conscience is but a word that cowards use.
Devised at first to keep the strong in awe: 310
Our strong arms be our conscience, swords
our law.

March on, join bravely, let us to 't pell-mell;
If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell.

His oration to his Army.

What shall I say more than I have inferr'd?
Remember whom you are to cope withal;
A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways,
A scum of Bretons, and base lackey peasants,
Whom their o'er-cloyed country vomits forth

To desperate ventures and assured destruction.
You sleeping safe, they bring to you unrest;
You having lands, and blest with beauteous
wives, 321

They would restrain the one, distain the other.
And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow,
Long kept in Bretagne at our mother's cost?
A milk-sop, one that never in his life
Felt so much cold as over shoes in snow?
Let's whip these stragglers o'er the seas again;
Lash hence these overweening rags of France,
These famish'd beggars, weary of their lives;
Who, but for dreaming on this fond exploit,
For want of means, poor rats, had hang'd
themselves:

If we be conquer'd, let men conquer us,
And not these bastard Bretons; whom our
fathers

Have in their own land beaten, bobb'd, and
thump'd,

And in record, left them the heirs of shame.
Shall these enjoy our lands? lie with our
wives?

Ravish our daughters? *[Drum afar off.]*

Hark! I hear their drum.

Fight, gentlemen of England! fight, bold
yeoman!

Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head!
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in
blood;

Amaze the welkin with your broken staves!

Enter a Messenger.

What says Lord Stanley? will he bring his
power?

Mess. My lord, he doth deny to come.

K. Rich. Off with his son George's head!

Nor. My lord, the enemy is past the
marsh:

After the battle let George Stanley die.

K. Rich. A thousand hearts are great
within my bosom:

Advance our standards, set upon our foes;

Our ancient word of courage, fair Saint
George,

Inspire us with the spleen of fiery dragons!

Upon them! Victory sits on our helms.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *Another part of the field.*

*Alarum: excursions. Enter NORFOLK and
forces fighting; to him CATESBY.*

Cate. Rescue, my Lord of Norfolk, rescue,
rescue!

The king enacts more wonders than a man,
Daring an opposite to every danger:

His horse is slain, and all on foot he fights,
Seeking for Richmond in the throat of death.
Rescue, fair lord, or else the day is lost!

Alarums. Enter KING RICHARD.

K. Rich. A horse! a horse! my kingdom
for a horse!

Cate. Withdraw, my lord; I'll help you
to a horse.

K. Rich. Slave, I have set my life upon
a cast,

And I will stand the hazard of the die: 10
I think there be six Richmonds in the field;
Five have I slain to-day instead of him.
A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Another part of the field.*

*Alarum. Enter RICHARD and RICHMOND;
they fight. RICHARD is slain. Retreat and
flourish. Re-enter RICHMOND, DERBY
bearing the crown, with divers other lords.*

Richm. God and your arms be praised,
victorious friends;

The day is ours, the bloody dog is dead.

Der. Courageous Richmond, well hast thou
acquitt thee.

Lo, here, this long-usurped royalty
From the dead temples of this bloody wretch
Have I pluck'd off, to grace thy brows withal:
Wear it, enjoy it, and make much of it.

Richm. Great God of heaven, say Amen
to all!

But, tell me, is young George Stanley living?

Der. He is, my lord, and safe in Leicester
town; 10

Whither, if it please you, we may now with-
draw us.

Richm. What men of name are slain on
either side?

Der. John Duke of Norfolk, Walter Lord
Ferrers,
Sir Robert Brakenbury, and Sir William
Brandon.

Richm. Inter their bodies as becomes their
births:

Proclaim a pardon to the soldiers fled
That in submission will return to us:
And then, as we have ta'en the sacrament,
We will unite the white rose and the red:
Smile heaven upon this fair conjunction, 20
That long have frown'd upon their enmity!
What traitor hears me, and says not amen?
England hath long been mad, and scarr'd
herself;

The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,
The father rashly slaughtered his own son,
The son, compell'd, been butcher to the sire:
All this divided York and Lancaster,
Divided in their dire division,

O, now, let Richmond and Elizabeth,
The true succeeders of each royal house, 30
By God's fair ordinance conjoin together!
And let their heirs, God, if they will be so,
Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced
peace,

With smiling plenty and fair prosperous days!
Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord,
That would reduce these bloody days again,
And make poor England weep in streams of
blood!

Let them not live to taste this land's increase
That would with treason wound this fair
land's peace!

Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives
again: 40

That she may long live here, God say amen!
[*Exeunt.*]